After hurricanes, a flood of God’s love

In the wake of Hurricane Harvey, strangers became like family.

Christians motivated by their love for Jesus opened their hearts — and their church buildings — to men, women and children fleeing a storm that flooded tens of thousands of homes and caused at least 82 deaths.

“I couldn’t put it into words. They’ve treated us like we were royalty from some foreign country,” retired Army Col. Chuck Emmerich, 81, said after spending four nights in the Belton Church of Christ gymnasium, about 200 miles northwest of Houston.

“They’ve treated us just like family, really,” added Emmerich, who was using a walker after stepping on glass during his evacuation and requiring treatment at the Carl R. Darnall Army Medical Center at Fort Hood.

A police boat rescued Emmerich, his wife, Marjorie, and their mixed-breed terrier, Mejia, as floodwaters rose in their Houston-area home on Sunday, Aug. 27. When the Pearland, Texas, residents went to bed about

‘It’s the least we could do to try to help. God bless’

Deacon Ted Bell, wearing a Churches of Christ Disaster Relief Inc. T-shirt, visits with residents in a hard-hit area of La Grange, Texas. After Hurricane Harvey, La Grange Church of Christ volunteers distributed food and supplies provided by the Nashville, Tenn.-based ministry. “It’s the least we could do to try to help,” Bell told one victim. “God bless.”

Florida congregation provides safe haven from Irma

As Hurricane Irma roared through Florida, dozens sought safety inside the Gulf Coast Church of Christ building in Fort Myers.

For about five hours on a Sunday afternoon, the crowd sat, listening to the roar of the wind as the eye of the storm passed right over them.

“Stuff was flying around and hitting,” Stephen Caldwell, associate minister for the Gulf Coast church, told The Christian Chronicle.

“The winds were blowing rain sideways, forcing it into the building through any crack it could find. As the waters crept in, people from the church and community worked together to clean up.

“The people jumped in, without even being asked, to mop and clean up with towels and empty buckets,” Caldwell said.

The ground in Gulf Coast was already saturated from a storm that had dropped 12 inches of rain just two weeks earlier, Caldwell said.

When the rain passed and the winds calmed, the crowd that
“Never in our wildest dreams could we have ever imagined having a tool like this.”
- Leonardo Rojos of Venezuela, after receiving his Solar Player.

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Churche’s aren’t safe from opioids

**DRUG ADDICTS** have ‘taught the rest of us to be honest,’ says Celebrate Recovery director as he urges Churches of Christ to reach out — and in — with God’s love to heal the hurting.

**BY CHELLIE ISON | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE**

**LAKE FOREST, Calif.** — “It’s something that if we, the church, don’t address, there’s going to be a lot more people that don’t have a chance for eternal life.”

Mac Owen believes those words wholeheartedly as he speaks about the nation’s raging epidemic of opioid abuse — a crisis that has no respect for class, age, race or religion.

“You can’t go anywhere now” to avoid the problem, said Owen, national director of Celebrate Recovery. “Even if you’re at church, there’s going to be somebody that’s involved in opioids.”

Owen spoke with *The Christian Chronicle* at the recovery ministry’s birthplace, Saddleback Church, during its 2017 Summit.

Congregations across the country, including dozens of Churches of Christ, host Celebrate Recovery programs. The annual conference helps train and equip ministry leaders.

Owen, who worships with a church in Colorado, is a former elder of the White’s Ferry Road Church of Christ in West Monroe, La. He and his wife, Mary, addressed the conference’s 2,000-plus participants the same week that President Donald Trump declared the opioid crisis a national emergency, a designation that offers states and federal agencies resources to combat the epidemic.

In the U.S., one death after another — See RECOVERY, Page 20

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Racial unity and food for thought

**AS THEY BREAK BARRIERS,** Churches of Christ partner to provide meals for schools.

**SPENCER, Okla.** — They came for the cause of spirit-led racial unity.

And they came with snacks.

Lots of snacks.

Christians from seven Churches of Christ across the Oklahoma City metro gathered recently for an evening of worship and fellowship — part of an ongoing United in Christ program designed to bridge the racial divide. The Green Pastures Church of Christ hosted the event.

Before the service started, the church members unloaded trucks filled with juice boxes, Rice Krispies Treats, granola bars and packages of pudding into a nearby food pantry. The goodies will fill the backpacks of students in need at nearby Green Pastures Elementary School.

With tears in her eyes, Emerald Griffin watched her fellow Christians fill the church’s storehouse.

“It’s really extraordinary that God’s... See FOOD, Page 10
FLOOD: For all of us, a restart

FROM PAGE 3

of LPs the four of us had collected over the years. We chuckled as we sorted through waterlogged albums by Kenny Rogers, Michael Jackson, Dire Straits, the Go-Go’s and our personal favorite — K-Tel’s “High Energy” collection featuring such hits as “Shake Your Groove Thing” by Peaches and Herb.

To be honest, we spent more time laughing than crying as we sorted through the flooded house. I think we truly understood that we have so much to be thankful for in the midst of this chaos. So many of our fellow Houstonians lost absolutely everything and aren’t adequately insured. Our hearts break for them — and will continue to break for them long after the TV cameras move on to the next storm. We pray for the long-term recovery, realizing that our hometown will never really be the same again.

It was a hard week, but it also was a week when I witnessed God doing amazing things. Over the entire metroplex and surrounding communities, people are giving in more ways than will ever be recorded.

God is moving people who do not call him by name. God is moving people who will never give him the glory. People are connecting with one another and bonding as they never have before. People are learning to appreciate one another for who they really are.

As a society, we are putting away all that doesn’t matter and being human together.

This hurricane caught our attention and changed our focus.

This hurricane forced us to remember what’s most important in life.

This hurricane is bringing our families, communities and nation together and helping us be our best — together.

Many of us are paralyzed by the overwhelming nature of the disaster — and will deal with the scars for years to come. Most of all, we mourn for those families who now have an empty spot at the dinner table.

It’s time to pick up and rebuild together. For all of us, this is a restart. How are we going to use it? How is this moment going to define us?

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**At Nebraska Youth Camp retreat, fathers, sons focus on ‘Strong Ties’**

A smiling Malachi Gnapp, seated next to his father, Garrett, watches a demonstration at the recent Dads-n-Lads retreat at the Nebraska Youth Camp in Kearney, Neb. About 70 fathers and sons attended the retreat, which featured the theme “Strong Ties.” Each participant received a length of rope, which was used in activities to learn useful knots as well as to illustrate the strong ties Christian men should have to God and one another, said Mark Miller, an elder of the East Hill Church of Christ in York, Neb.

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**ALABAMA**

**JACKSONVILLE** — The most recent issue of the evangelistic publication *House to House/Heart to Heart* was mailed to 3.2 million homes.

“More than 1,300 congregations joined together with *House to House* to reach the most families we have ever reached,” said Matt Wallin, who signs up churches to distribute the publication. “We have already received word of three baptisms from this issue.”

The Jacksonville Church of Christ oversees the ministry.

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**LOUISIANA**

**CALHOUN** — For nearly a quarter-century, a workshop focused on prayer has drawn church members from near and far to a rural congregation just off Interstate 20.

The recent 24th annual Calhoun Prayer Enrichment Workshop drew 44 registrants from six states, although some attended who didn’t register, minister Keith Roberts said.

“We’ve had 47 different speakers over the years,” Robert said. “It been a joy to do this workshop and see many of the same guests come back year after year.”

This year’s speakers included Albert Lemmons, James Nored, John Dobbs, Marco Senoret and Roberts.

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**MASSACHUSETTS**

**WEST SPRINGFIELD** — Let’s Start Talking sent three teams of workers to help the West Springfield Church of Christ for six weeks over the summer.

The volunteers from Salina, Kan., Canyon, Texas, and Dallas worked with the church on outreach to international neighbors, minister Gareth Flanary said. More than 50 readers from 21 countries were served.

“Each LST teacher built trust as they met the reader’s need for English improvement,” Flanary said.

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**OKLAHOMA**

**TULSA** — “Family 2 Family” was the name of a recent door-knocking campaign by the Crosstown Church of Christ. Members invited more than 2,500 neighbors to attend a family seminar organized by the church.

“God has revealed himself through the neighbors we have met and served as well as through the people who have served alongside us,” minister Robert Prater said.

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**TEXAS**

**GARLAND** — The Buckingham Road Church of Christ participated for the first time in a national movement to invite people who are not frequent churchgoers to try church again or perhaps attend for the first time.

National Back to Church Sunday was Sept. 17, elder Willie Hunter said.

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**SPOTLIGHT**

**Minister honored**

**ESCONDIDO, Calif.** — The North County Church of Christ recently celebrated the 30th anniversary of Manuel Magos serving as its Spanish language minister.

The church’s Spanish ministry has grown from a small core to more than 300 active participants, many of whom are second and third generation and worship in English, senior minister Kevin Withem said. After several years, the ministry formed a team and planted a congregation in Tijuana, Mexico, across the U.S. border from San Diego.

Two Spanish-speaking elders serve alongside Magos and as part of the congregation’s whole elder body, Withem said.

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**MARK MILLER**

A smiling Malachi Gnapp, seated next to his father, Garrett, watches a demonstration at the recent Dads-n-Lads retreat at the Nebraska Youth Camp in Kearney, Neb. About 70 fathers and sons attended the retreat, which featured the theme “Strong Ties.” Each participant received a length of rope, which was used in activities to learn useful knots as well as to illustrate the strong ties Christian men should have to God and one another, said Mark Miller, an elder of the East Hill Church of Christ in York, Neb.
HARVEY: ‘If somebody had a need, we tried to fulfill it’

FROM PAGE 1

10:30 p.m. the previous night, there wasn’t even a puddle in their yard, Emmerich said. But when he got up to go to the bathroom about midnight, his feet squished into wet carpet.

“We’re flooding!” he told his wife.

By 4 a.m., 4 feet of water filled the Emmeriches’ house. The husband and wife climbed into their second-floor loft. Their son in Ohio alerted a police dispatcher to send help. They were rescued about noon.

Later, the couple and their dog boarded a bus and endured a six-hour ride — with lots of twists and turns to avoid flooded roadways — to this central Texas community of 18,000, between Waco and Austin.

At the Belton church that Monday morning, Aug. 28, volunteers were waiting. Church members greeted the evacuees, fed them, gave them dry clothes and offered them cots with comfortable mattresses and neatly arranged blankets.

The Belton Church of Christ — like the First Baptist Church down the street and many other houses of faith throughout the Lone Star State — had taken steps years before to “stand up” as a temporary shelter in just such a disaster.

The call to mobilize came from emergency management officials that Friday, Aug. 25.

Belton church member Jennifer Smith, the church’s shelter manager, immediately began assembling a list of volunteers and assigning tasks to make the process go as smoothly as possible.

“We’ve had a great group of volunteers come together to pull this whole building of love together and take these evacuees in and help get them back on their feet,” Smith said.

“We’ve made sure that they have a great place to sleep, a warm meal in their body and lots of love and visiting and activities.

“We’ve had a lot of wonderful stories, a lot of goosebump moments,” she added. “If somebody had a need, we tried to fulfill it as quickly as we could. ... I can’t even explain all of it. You just kind of have to be there and experience it to understand how big of a difference

A small gesture can be to somebody who has nothing.”

WE’RE REALLY HOMELESS

Like the Belton church, the Champions Church of Christ — a Houston congregation that avoided flooding — transformed its building into an emergency shelter.

“I just can’t think of a word to describe them,” said Gilbert Alexander, a 61-year-old Venezuelan who was in Houston for cancer treatment when the rains came. “It’s like a family — very nice people.”

As their house flooded, Richard Sinclair, 77, and his wife, Toni, 69, waded through waist-high water and climbed a fence as a Cajun Navy volunteer helped them to safety.

“We were really homeless without any idea where we were,” Toni Sinclair said. “The church was so overwhelmingly warm and friendly. It just made me cry.

“They had a little kennel for our dog and ... brought us food,” she said through tears. “We hadn’t eaten in a day and a half. They just continued to give to us and love us and share with us what we needed to do. And they gave us clothes and a shower.”

Church member Lisa Reed said she couldn’t help but feel compassion for the Sinclairs.

“They were not people used to asking for help but giving help,” Reed said. “They sat with wet clothes and cold feet with tons of donated items all around them. Finally ... we were able to give some of the most basic needs: food, socks, shower, bedding, makeup. The next day we were able to get them placed in very nice temporary housing.

“This is just one of thousands of stories, but it is humbling and emotional for us all,” she added. “God bless all of those who are suffering and those helping.”

The Champions church housed up to 15 evacuees per night, even while focusing on other disaster needs — such as distributing food and cleaning supplies collected for flooding victims.

“At the Champions Church of Christ in Houston, elder Don Sammons and deacon Ryan Nelson organize cleaning supplies collected for flooding victims.

SHOWING JESUS’ LOVE

Back in Belton, the church housed 34 evacuees — including entire families.

Elder Scott Cox said the shelter was a natural way to show Jesus’ love to people caught in a desperate situation.

“It was just meeting a need,” Cox said of the church’s role. “It was really neat to see the community support that came as well.”

Emmerich, a father of three and grandfather of five, said he assumes his house — which has flooded multiple times before — will be a total loss.

“I don’t have a home,” he said, voicing hope that Federal Emergency Management Agency funding will allow him to rebuild outside a flood zone. “From what I understand, the water went over the top of the house.”

After four nights, the Belton church’s shelter was dismantled as evacuees were moved to other temporary housing.

Emmerich’s voice choked with emotion as he and his wife said goodbye to the volunteers.

“I’m going to miss all of you,” he told them.

Church member Maria Garay wrapped her arms around Emmerich and smiled at him.

“He’s my sweetie. If he wasn’t married, I’d take him,” she said, teasingly.

“We wanted to keep Chuck and Marge!” another member, Sue Roeder Groveunder, wrote on Facebook. “It was hard to let them leave.”

“I will always remember this sweet couple. Love love!” agreed Sarah Lamb Beaver.

In the wake of Hurricane Harvey, strangers became like family.

UPDATES: www.christianchronicle.org
Small-town Texas church becomes a hub for relief

BY BOBBY ROSS JR. | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

LA GRANGE, Texas — Days after Hurricane Harvey, La Grange Church of Christ volunteers dressed in lime green disaster relief T-shirts fill pickup beds with shovels, bottled water and cleaning supplies.

Deacons Ted Bell and Paul Vogel and 11-year-old Landon Von Minden drove a black, 4-by-4 truck into a devastated mobile home park. Debris and tree limbs are piled high along the roadway.

Red X’s painted on the sides of twisted structures identify the date when firefighters checked for survivors or victims and the number found.

Bell and Vogel introduce themselves to residents digging through belongings and ask if they can use any food, diapers or supplies.

“It’s the least we could do to try to help. God bless,” Bell tells a victim who voices appreciation for the gesture.

“They’re letting everybody come in and take out what they can,” Vogel explains. “Then they’re going to tear everything out with a bulldozer.”

The record-breaking rains brought by Harvey washed away a big chunk of this Texas town of 4,600.

When the Colorado River overflowed its banks, more than 350 homes were destroyed in this community between Austin and Houston, said Scott Elliott, minister for the La Grange Church of Christ.

But with the tragedy came an opportunity to show the love of Jesus, Elliott said: The church immediately became La Grange’s donation hub.

“Our building has filled to capacity with donated items and volunteers,” Laura Elliott, the preacher’s wife, wrote on Facebook a few days after the storm. “It’s an amazing sight to behold. Every pew ... is also filled with donated and sorted items as well as every classroom and hallway.”

The building filled up so quickly, in fact, that it became obvious a larger facility would be needed, Scott Elliott said. After three days, the church handed over operations to a nonprofit with two warehouses.

Church volunteers then shifted to a different focus, going into devastated areas to distribute food and other items provided by Nashville, Tenn.-based Churches of Christ Disaster Relief Effort. By press time, 27 Churches of Christ had received tractor-trailer loads of Harvey relief supplies from the national organization, associate director Ken Leonard said.

“Be patient if a truck hasn’t gotten to your congregation yet,” Leonard wrote on Facebook. “We’ll get to you soon. Pray for Texas and the saints that are helping us.”

In the mobile home park, Michael Chaney is helping a friend, Pattie Chilek. “It could be a lot worse,” says Chaney, who escaped the floodwaters.

He pauses and nods toward his friend.

“This lady, she has nothing now,” he says.

After distributing the boxes, Bell takes off his cap. He wipes the sweat from his brow.

The day before, he had driven to Houston — about 100 miles east of here — to offer assistance to two of his four adult daughters. Both of their homes flooded.

“I tell you what,” he says, “it takes it out of you going to see so many people who are hurting.”

But amid the heartache, he has seen many people at their caring, giving best — and that inspires him.

At the local Walmart, he bought $152.90 worth of cleaning supplies to take to his daughters. A woman who noticed the items in his shopping cart insisted on paying for them.

“What’s your name?” he asked her.

“My name doesn’t matter,” she replied. “I just want to help.”

The auditorium of the Hidden Valley Church of Christ in Houston fills with water as rains fall during Hurricane Harvey.

A bucket challenge and a feeding of 5,000 hot dogs: Quotes from the long road of recovery

“I want to challenge you with the Hurricane Bucket Challenge. Now, don’t worry. You won’t get drenched in water. We’ve had too much of that around here.”

DOUG FYFFE, senior minister, Grace Crossing Church of Christ in Conroe, Texas, challenging Christians to donate five-gallon buckets and cleaning supplies for Harvey victims.

“It was an amazing time to come together as a church family — just to see each other and hug each other and cry some and laugh some.”

RICK FYFFE, senior minister, Southeast Church of Christ in Friendswood, Texas, on his congregation’s Sunday worship in an auditorium with the carpet ripped up after flooding.

“We’re committed to stay here. First of all, how do we sell property that’s under 4 feet of water?”

FORREST SUEHS, elder, Hidden Valley Church of Christ in Houston, which flooded for the fifth time.

“Every meeting we ask ourselves: ‘Do we need to move?’ Then I hear, ‘People need the Lord in this area, too.’ It’s not an easy question.”

CRUZ HERNANDEZ, minister, Hidden Valley church.

“Sometimes, I think it takes something bad happening to bring us all together.”

NETTYE LAWS, member, Fifth Ward Church of Christ in Houston, on the outpouring of compassion and generosity after Harvey.

“If it was good enough for Jesus, it’s good enough for us.”

BLAN CHRANE, minister, Franklin Church of Christ in Texas, on his congregation grilling 5,000 hot dogs for the Fifth Ward Church of Christ in Houston after Harvey.
Hope for heroes and victims

‘DO NOT LET YOUR SPIRITUAL LIFE GO’ while you’re helping other people in the name of Jesus,’ a Houston minister tells his congregation after Hurricane Harvey.

HOUSTON

This one was personal. When I traveled to New Orleans and the Mississippi Gulf Coast to cover Hurricane Katrina in 2005, the churches I visited were new to me. The resilient Christians who survived Katrina became special to me. However, I didn’t know them before the storm. Hurricane Harvey is different.

In my time with The Christian Chronicle, I have made frequent trips to Houston: I have come here to report on churches — black, white and brown — joining together to show unity in Christ. I have come here to report on the growing congregation of Vietnamese immigrants — a story I hadn’t even finished before Harvey beckoned me back to Rocket City.

David Duncan, minister for the Memorial Church of Christ in Houston, is one of my best friends. We attended Oklahoma Christian University together in the 1980s. But we didn’t really become close until 1999 when we roomed together on a mission trip to Vitoria, Brazil, where David and his wife, Barbara, had spent a decade as full-time missionaries.

When I baptized my son Brady, then 8 years old, on a Saturday night in 2001, David was there. Three days later, when terrorists crashed airplanes into the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, David was one of the first people I called.

During baseball season, David and I trade barbs back and forth — mainly via text messages — about my Rangers and his Astros. This season, he has enjoyed those exchanges a little more than I have. Check the American League West standings to understand why.

Even as floodwaters brought by Harvey rose and the disaster in America’s fourth-largest city became more worrisome, I felt comfortable joking with David.

“This is getting really serious,” I texted on the Sunday after Harvey made landfall. “I’m starting to fear that we may all have to be Astros fans this October.”

That Monday, I wrote, “Hope you haven’t floated away.” “Not yet but about to get rough for many,” he replied. An evacuation was under way only a mile from his house. “Yikes!” I said. “Will keep praying. Need anything?” “Just prayer,” he said. “You couldn’t get anything else to us, any way. :-(”

I laughed. And prayed.

Later, I texted him again: “If you build an ark, please wait for me to get there to take pictures of it.”

As I headed to Houston and other parts of Texas to report on the Harvey relief effort, I visited eight Churches of Christ — some of them separated by hundreds of miles — over three days.

Yes, one of those churches was the one where David preaches. It’s a congregation where I have many beloved friends — too many to name — and always feel at home. After seeing so much destruction and hearing so many harrowing accounts of survival and loss, my soul craved a hopeful message from God’s word.

My friend did not disappoint me. “This morning I’m looking out at a crowd of heroes and a crowd of victims,” David said at Memorial’s first Sunday service after Harvey, recalling how some members took boats to rescue trapped victims and how others joined volunteer crews focused on cleanup and recovery.

“If you are a victim, it’s because your house was flooded, and you didn’t have a chance to be a hero,” he added. The homes of 30 Memorial families were “flooded out.”

On this Lord’s Day, church members arriving for worship passed a table in the lobby with two signs.

“I want help,” said one sign.

“I need help or know someone who does,” said another.

In his sermon, David offered a message of hope both for the heroes and the victims. He read from Lamentations 3:22-23: “Because of the Lord’s great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.”

“Our hope is in God, even in the worst storm, and will not go away,” David told the congregation.

But he acknowledged, “It is not easy to be patient when there is water in your house, there is no bread in the store, and you’re at your 17th gas station.” (Some gas stations temporarily ran out of fuel.)

Recovery will be a long process, but Christians must take time for rest, family time and spiritual renewal, the minister said. “Do not let your spiritual life go while you’re helping other people in the name of Jesus,” he warned.

Before I left that Sunday, I reminded my friend — who had worked almost constantly since the rain stopped falling — of his own words.

He will need them.

CONTACT: Bobby.ross@christianchronicle.org
IRMA: ‘People scattered like doves’

had gathered inside the church building went outside. They found power lines down and tree limbs and other debris scattered throughout the area.

Florida’s emergency management officials say more than 6.5 million homes and businesses were left without power. While crews worked to get the electricity back on, residents picked up around their towns.

“The lower-lying areas are suffering from an abundance of water,” Caldwell said. “It is going down quickly.”

The damage was severe in some areas, but Caldwell says they all realize it could have been much worse.

“There’s nobody here in shock. Everyone’s jumping up helping folks,” he said.

Helping folks is what Eric Shepherd was doing, as well.

Shepherd, a member of the Rockledge Church of Christ on Florida’s East Coast, is a firefighter. After the storm passed, he was among the crews sent out to assess the damage and look for anyone trapped.

“We did have a collapsed building in our area, but no one was inside,” Shepherd said. “No storm surge in our area, but a few streets were flooded.”

In Miami-Dade County, at the Sunset Church of Christ, numerous trees were down. Church members worked to clean up.

“The goal is to get all the shutters off the doors and to clear the parking lot for Sunday assembly,” minister Jim Holway said after the storm.

Shepherd said he’s been in Florida most of his life, and so he’s lived through several hurricanes. However, he said even the large ones he remembers were “mild compared to this one.”

He and Caldwell believe the warnings with this storm were taken seriously. People either made their way to shelters or left town early enough to miss the storm. However, the fear that came with the warnings did cause some problems.

“People scattered like doves being flushed from a field, and in some cases, without much thought,” Caldwell said.

Many found themselves stuck in traffic for hours or without enough gas to get out of the way of the storm.

As people began returning home, Florida Gov. Rick Scott tried to make sure they had enough fuel to get there.

“At my direction, the Florida Highway Patrol will continue to escort fuel resupply trucks to gas stations so fuel is quickly delivered to our communities,” Scott said. “We will continue to work around the clock so Floridians have fuel at the pumps as our state begins to recover from this powerful storm.”

The governor also waived a tax on fuel entering the state, to ensure Floridians could get the fuel they needed.

The work to clean up was quickly moving ahead, and Caldwell and Shepherd believe Florida will be able to recover quickly.

“We’ll get this thing,” Caldwell said. “I bet in three weeks you’ll hardly notice we had one.”

HOW TO HELP: See www.christianchronicle.org for a list of churches and nonprofits accepting funds for Harvey and Irma relief or call our offices at (405) 425-5070 for more information.
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Carlos Griffin preaches during the United in Christ Sunday night service in Spencer.

**FOOD:** Churches unite to fight hunger

Oklahoma to bring together members of predominantly black and predominantly white congregations for fellowship and service. Shannon Hayes and Doug Hogan, co-founders of the effort and members of the Memorial Road Church of Christ in Oklahoma City, saw the backpack program as an opportunity for Christians to work together.

“It’s a great effort to show how we can come together for a collective common cause and bless others,” Hayes said.

Doug Caldwell, a member of the Wilshire Church of Christ in Oklahoma City, said he didn’t hesitate to get involved in the effort.

“The relief of childhood hunger is an issue of great importance to our community,” Caldwell said, “and I don’t think it can be supported enough.”

After unloading the snacks, about 180 church members gathered inside the Green Pastures church building for Sunday night worship.

“We had been wanting to do more things together, and this provided an opportunity for us to collaborate,” said Kelly Osborne, a member of The Springs Church of Christ in Oklahoma City. “I just feel like churches uniting makes us strong.”

**EXPANDED COVERAGE:** Read The Oklahoman’s feature by Carla Hinton, religion editor, at newsok.com. Search for “Green Pastures Church of Christ.”
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• Network teachers of missions within Christian colleges

With a background as a child of missionaries in Jerusalem and Jordan, and a missionary himself in Nazareth for 9 years, Dr. Huffard comes with extensive “on the ground” experience. In addition, he has worked on the “sending” side of missions as a preacher, elder, and professor and dean of Harding School of Theology. He has provided consulting and teaching services in churches all over the world, and is highly respected among church and missions leaders.

To schedule Dr. Huffard for coaching or equipping, please contact him at evertt.huffard@MRNet.org.

Visit www.MRNet.org for more valuable resources.

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I’m always up for a good game, but never with my money.

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<th>4.65% APY</th>
<th>3.56% APY</th>
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<td>5 Year Certificate</td>
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4.65% APY is based on a minimum investment of $10,000 for a term of 5 years. 3.56% APY is based on a minimum investment of $10,000 for a term of 3 years. 2.99% APY is based on a minimum investment of $500 for a term of 1 year. The content and material contained herein are not an offer to sell or a solicitation of an offer to buy Investment Certificates of The Solomon Foundation. The offer is made solely by and through our Offering Circular, which you should read carefully before making an investment decision. The Investment Certificates are subject to certain risks as described in the Offering Circular. Investment Certificates are offered and sold only in states where authorized. Investment Certificates of The Solomon Foundation are not insured by the FDIC, SIPC or any other governmental agency. TSF has the right to call Certificates for redemption at any time upon sixty (60) days written notice. In such event, interest will be paid to the date of redemption.

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David Duncan
Memorial Church of Christ

Cruz Herrnandez
Hidden Valley Church of Christ

By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.
John 13:35

Sunday, November 26, 2017

A call for churches of Christ all over the world to reach out to congregations of different races for an evening of worship and fellowship.
Join us and report your fellowship to be listed in the January 2018 issue of the Christian Chronicle.

Contact Email: dduncan@mcoc.org or gsmith@fwcoc.org

WORLD CHRISTIAN BROADCASTING’S

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AUSTRALIA

MELBOURNE — The Klesis Bible program, a ministry of Churches of Christ, recently hosted a weeklong study program on hermeneutics, or advanced Bible study methods. The program, launched in 2014, caters to Christians who want to engage in intensive ministry training with minimal disruption to their work schedules.

“In the beginning, I was overwhelmed by different terminologies and the subject itself,” said Kenneth Gong, a member of the Seremban Church of Christ in Malaysia. “But it’s better to learn from Christian teachers like Dr. Tim Westbrook from Harding University, who taught the module, rather than from other sources who may mislead or cast doubt on the inspired Word of God.”

BRAZIL

PAULINIA — Mike and Vicki Ross assist in an evangelistic ministry designed to reach souls across Brazil and the Portuguese-speaking world.

The Rosses, missionaries in Paulinia, about 75 miles north of São Paulo, serve as internet support for Escola Bíblica Mundial, or EBM, World Bible School’s Portuguese correspondence ministry. John Reese, the Texas-based ministry’s president, spoke to more than 500 leaders and members of Churches of Christ in Brazil earlier this year about opportunities provided by EBM to reach the South American nation’s 207 million souls.

GREECE

CORINTH — It was their “first time to visit paradise,” said refugees from the Middle East who participated in the 14th annual church retreat in this ancient biblical city, sponsored by the Omonia Church of Christ in Greece.

The refugees, served by the Omonia church, were among 100-plus participants. Jim Holway, a minister for the Sunset Church of Christ in Miami, was the guest speaker.

HONDURAS

SANTA ROSA DE COPÁN — Two Churches of Christ, one in Georgia and one in Texas, partnered to serve the underserved in this Central American nation. A team from the Burnt Hickory church in Marietta, Ga., and the Legacy church in North Richland Hills, Texas, served 982 Hondurans with medical attention, medication and eyeglasses. Mission Upreach, a church-supported nonprofit, coordinated the work. Church members also served on construction teams to help the ministry construct cabins to house future mission groups.

Tent cities of medical missionaries serve villages of souls

NAZIBBULA, Zambia — In a rural village of this southern African nation, medical missionaries walk from a caravan of buses to serve patients during an annual Zambia Medical Mission trip. The team of 80 American physicians, medical personnel and volunteers join about 150 Zambian Christians as part of the mission, which involves long journeys over rugged bush roads to reach villages in need of medical services.

Workers with Zambia Mission, a nonprofit associated with Churches of Christ, set up tent cities in the villages the medical brigades visit, including Chuundwe (in the photo below.) The Christians treat as many as 2,000 patients at the mobile medical clinics.

WEBSITE: www.zambiamission.org

New wheels for a new India

ELURU, India — India’s rapidly modernizing roads present challenges for evangelists who rely on bicycles to reach ministry appointments, said Bill Adcox of India Mission Fund, a ministry of Churches of Christ.

Small, single-lane paths are now interstate highways, often clogged with cars, Adcox wrote in Gospel Tidings, a church publication. As a result, journeys across town that once took minutes now take hours.

Evangelists now request scooters for their work.

The India Mission Fund recently supplied an evangelist named Joshua with a scooter for his ministry during a gospel meeting in Eluru.

“Joshua was very surprised and happy to receive his new wheels,” Adcox wrote.
LUBBOCK CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY Invites Nominations and Applications for the Position of Provost and Chief Academic Officer.

LCU is a Christ-centered, academic community of learners, transforming the hearts, minds, and hands of students for lives of purpose and service. The provost serves as the chief academic officer of the university, reporting to the president and providing strategic leadership for the university’s undergraduate and graduate degree programs.

A successful candidate for provost will have a terminal degree; significant experience as a university educator and scholar; an established record of service in higher education, including experience in academic leadership; strong, collaborative leadership skills; and a keen understanding of the issues facing higher education, especially faith-based higher education. The candidate will be a committed follower of Jesus Christ and an active member of a congregation of the Churches of Christ.

Applications will be accepted until November 15, 2017, and the appointment as Provost will begin on June 1, 2018.

The responsibilities of the provost include:
• Ensure academic excellence in all of the university’s academic programs
• Supervise the deans of the university’s four colleges, as well as the director of the university library
• Actively participate on the university’s leadership team
• Manage the budget for all instructional areas
• Lead strategic planning for academic programs in alignment with LCU 2020, the university’s strategic plan
• Represent the university to various external audiences
• Provide coordination and oversight of programs and initiatives that support and advance academic excellence at LCU, including the Global Campus Office, the Rhodes Family Institute for Undergraduate Research, and other academic initiatives.

Lubbock Christian University enrolls almost 2000 students, offering sixty-six undergraduate majors and more than twenty graduate degree programs. With approximately 100 full-time faculty members, the university enjoys a low student-faculty ratio, consistent with the high level of engagement between faculty and students. The university is a national leader in undergraduate research, maintains an emphasis for faculty on teaching and mentoring, and has a growing number of faculty who are making important scholarly contributions in their fields. Over the course of the last twenty-four months, the university has added more than 90,000 square feet of academic space, a significant investment toward realizing the university’s ambitious vision as reflected in LCU 2020.

For more information, please visit LCU.edu/Provost.

Submit Letters of Nomination or Interest by November 15, 2017:

LCU Provost Search Committee
Attn: Office of the President
5601 19th Street • Lubbock, Texas 79407

Lubbock Christian University is an equal opportunity employer.
For many American churches, a Sunday potluck might feature casseroles, buckets of chicken and salads with crushed chips on top.

At the Vietnamese Church of Christ in this ethnically diverse metropolis, fellowship meals happen differently. The meal is a gateway of sorts, introducing visitors to the culture of a church community that doesn’t seem in a hurry to eat and get on with the day.

The main dish is prepared on site, and the menu rarely varies because it’s so anticipated by those who attend: seasoned spare ribs, rice, noodles with fish sauce, salad and homemade desserts.

Outside the Northwest Church of Christ’s youth room, where the Vietnamese congregation meets while raising money for its own building, men set up canopies emblazoned with Houston Texans logos to provide shade from the searing sun. They huddle underneath and prepare the beef in stages, thinly slicing ribs and marinating them with a blend of traditional Vietnamese seasonings.

These ribs are laid upon a sizzling grill, hot flames hissing at the contact. A breeze carries the tantalizing smells inside the crowded room where Hung Nguyen preaches, causing children to whisper excitedly to each other.

‘The next life is a new life’

WHY FORMER REFUGEES from Vietnam put a lien on their house to buy land for a church building.
The youngest children bubble in a blend of Vietnamese- and broken English, while school-aged youngsters have a mastery of the language that comes from immersion in Houston-area public schools. Some of the adults speak both English and Vietnamese. A translator — sometimes one of the children — helps bridge any language barriers. The tantalizing meal does the same. Food is a universal language, as the serving pans show. Showing hospitality is Scriptural.

**NO WORD IN THEIR NATIVE LANGUAGE**
The Vietnamese congregation of roughly 30 souls assembles in a small white structure. It’s across the parking lot from the Vietnamese campus’ large white sign. The relationship with the Vietnamese congregation began when Ha Vu, a Northwest member who fled the communists when Saigon fell in 1975, brought three leaders of a Protestant church to see the elders and minister Jim Middleton.

“They were looking for a place to hold services, but brother Vu taught them that they had a greater need,” Middleton said.

As a result of Bible studies, the three men — including minister Hung Nguyen — were baptized. Later, more members of the Protestant church decided to be immersed for the remission of sins.

“His love,” Vu said of Nguyen’s ministry prior to studying with the Northwest leaders. “He preach almost correct except for baptism.”

“I have a big change in my mind about the salvation,” Nguyen said.

**A HAVEN FOR VIETNAMESE REFUGEES**
Houston became a haven for Vietnamese refugees when it welcomed tens of thousands of “boat people” in the 1970s.

About 73,000 residents of Harris County, where Houston is located, speak Vietnamese at home, according to U.S. Census Bureau data.

Vu grew up Catholic but was baptized as an adult in Vietnam after he began studying the Bible and met a U.S. military chaplain. The chaplain told him about a church that seemed closest to the one he had read about in the Scriptures, Vu said.

For nearly four decades, Vu has dreamed about building a church in the U.S. for people to worship in their native language.

“Voices of Immigrants” can reach out to the surrounding area from a place where they can teach Christ, serve the community and worship together.

**TO HELP**
Send checks earmarked for “Vietnamese building fund” to the Northwest church at 6720 West Tidwell Road, Houston, TX 77092.

Mrs. Tam and Mrs. Sau open their Bibles as they pay close attention to the Scriptures cited during a Sunday service at the Vietnamese church. Some of the younger attendees are all dressed up for Sunday worship. Vicky and Sau, members of the Vietnamese Church of Christ, prepare the Lord’s Supper. They partake of communion weekly. Before their conversion, they only did so monthly. Preacher Hung Nguyen was baptized after studying with Northwest church leaders.

Bible class teacher Ha Vu, right, “is one of the most evangelistic men I’ve known,” Northwest church elder Julio Cedeño says. Vu, a former Catholic, was baptized as an adult.

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“The next life is a new life.”

**The Lord has risen!**

Seemingly, the Vietnamese Church of Christ in the U.S. proclaims in red and blue.

“The Lord has risen!,” say the words on a screen — in Vietnamese and English.

“Brother Vu is one of the most evangelistic men I’ve known,” Cedeño said.

“he’s awesome,” Vu and his wife, Tanya Nguyen, put a $100,000 lien on their house in Hockley, a 45-minute drive from Northwest, to buy property on which to build a Vietnamese church.

“I know that this life is temporary,” Vu said of his willingness to put his wife’s financial security at risk.

“Why don’t you buy it?” Tanya Nguyen said of the land. “So in the morning, I say, ‘Honey, we need to buy the land.’ So he was very happy. He couldn’t believe it.”

Behind the wheel of her small truck, she navigates easily between stories of family in Vietnam and the U.S. while negotiating traffic.

Under a bright blue sky on a corner not far from a large housing development, a handful of church members step out of vehicles and trudge uneven terrain to a large white sign.

“Future Vietnamese Church of Christ Houston,” it proclaims in red and blue.

The men and women clap hands, and Vu prays for a day when those gathered can reach out to the surrounding area from a place where they can teach Christ, serve the community and worship together.

Chùa đa sống lại
The Lord has risen

*The next life is a new life.*

“Brother Vu is one of the most evangelistic men I’ve known,” Cedeño said.

“Hung Nguyen is a common name in Vietnam, where wives do not take their husband’s surname.”

“One night I sleep, and I hear God reminding me, ‘Why don’t you buy it?’” Tanya Nguyen said of the land. “So in the morning, I say, ‘Honey, we need to buy the land.’ So he was very happy. He couldn’t believe it.”

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Tanya Nguyen, wife of Ha Vu, helps serve the Sunday fellowship meal.

**CONTINUED**

The Vietnamese church in Houston area began with a prayer in 2006.

Voices of Immigrants can reach out to the surrounding area from a place where they can teach Christ, serve the community and worship together.

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The 40-year-old AMEN Ministry connects Christians in the United States Military with local churches of Christ both overseas and in the U.S. Please send name, email, and other contact info to:

AMEN Ministry
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4,700 trek to Polishing the Pulpit

A crowd listens to a message at the recent Polishing the Pulpit event. The annual workshop drew 4,700 men, women and children to the mountains of Sevierville, Tenn. People from 35 states and 12 countries listened to 170 speakers present more than 700 lessons over seven days. Seventeen responded to the Gospel, including one teen who was baptized into Christ. For more information, see www.polishingthepulpit.com.

CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

MIDLAND CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

MIDLAND, Texas — Eddie Lee, superintendent of Midland Christian School for 32 years, will retire at the end of this school year.

“I’ve been blessed to spend my career at a wonderful place that has allowed me to share the love of Christ with many young people,” said Lee, who arrived as a science teacher 42 years ago. He served as high school principal for five years.

His son, Jared Lee, will succeed him. Jared Lee grew up at Midland Christian, graduating in 1999. He attended Abilene Christian University, earning his degree in 2003. He served as a teacher and junior high principal at MCS for three years and as high school principal at Brentwood Christian School in Austin for five years. He returned to his alma mater as academic dean five years ago.

COUNSELING

LIFELINE CHAPLAINCY

HOUSTON — Lifeline Chaplaincy is responding to the spiritual needs of many Hurricane Harvey victims.

In addition, the ministry’s sister organization Compassionate Touch is helping with the emergency financial needs of the hardest-hit patients, said Timothy Johnson, Lifeline vice president.

Lifeline has a 33-year history of representing Churches of Christ in the major hospitals of the Texas Medical Center.

Begun as a one-chaplain ministry at M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, the organization is now also in major hospitals in Austin, Temple, Fort Worth and Dallas. Five certified hospital chaplains recruit, train and oversee 200 volunteers who give support to patients and caregivers.

Compassionate Touch provides short-term intermediate support of housing, travel and meals to those whose resources have been depleted. To donate, see www.compassionatetouch.org.

To make referrals for patient visits, see www.lifelinechaplaincy.org or email referral@lifelinechaplaincy.org.
an average of 91 a day, according to the Centers for Disease Control — is blamed on opioids, drugs that act on the body’s nervous system to relieve pain. Many are legal, prescription medications such as oxycodone, hydrocodone and methadone.

Since 1999, the use of prescription pain killers has quadrupled, according to the CDC. In 2015, 33,000 people died as a result of opioids. More than half of those deaths resulted from prescription opioids.

**FROM PRESCRIPTIONS TO HEROIN**

Illegal opioids include heroin, a drug that Owen said was the choice for many addicts looking for pain relief decades ago. “When we were coming up in the 60s, heroin was everywhere but then it sort of went on the downturn,” he said. “But then doctors started prescribing all these drugs, like OxyContin and other opioid drugs, and what people found was they were getting hooked on it but they couldn’t afford it.

“So, the natural thing was to go back to heroin because it’s cheaper and they could get the same high.”

Recent research supports Owen’s words. Heroin use in the U.S. reached the highest level in 20 years, according to the 2016 World Drug Report produced by the United Nations’ Office on Drugs and Crime. The CDC reports similar numbers and notes a rise in heroin addiction among women, the privately insured and people with high incomes.

“What I love about Celebrate Recovery is we’re not sitting on the sidelines talking about, ‘are these things we’re going to talk about?’” Owen said. “We’re saying we need to address them and we need to address them now.”

**FILLING THE VOID WITH JESUS, NOT DRUGS**

Launched in 1991 by John Baker, a recovering alcoholic, now a Saddleback minister, Celebrate Recovery uses biblical principles to help people overcome their hurtful habits — from codependency to anger and addiction.

For Kilo and Jill Cerda, Celebrate Recovery offers the chance to help others find healing and a relationship with Christ — the same blessings they’ve received from the program.

“I was an alcoholic for over 25 years and tried to quit on my own time and time again,” Kilo Cerda said. “I would always fail.”

Through Celebrate Recovery, he found Christ and a way to fill the void he had inside.

“I filled it with Jesus Christ and that was what I was missing,” he said. Now he and his wife are Celebrate Recovery ministry leaders for their congregation, the Visalia Church of Christ in California.

The ministry gives the couple the chance to walk alongside others struggling with addiction, whether it be alcohol, opioids or something else. Those who participate in the program “find that there are people that care about them,” Kilo Cerda said. “There are people that support them and keep them accountable.”

They also find transformation, he added, and witnessing change in someone’s life as they go through the program shows him the power of the cross.

**‘WE’RE ALL MESSY PEOPLE’**

The Owens said they’ve also found joy as they’ve worked in the program. Mac Owen found healing from his addictions through secular recovery programs years ago. Then, in 2005, he and Mary helped to start Celebrate Recovery at the White’s Ferry Road church.

“We saw a ministry that was amazing,” Mac Owen said. “(It’s) not just for drug addicts and alcoholics, but for anyone with a hurt, habit or hang-up.

“We’re still trying to figure out who doesn’t have one of those,” he added.

The Celebrate Recovery ministry at White’s Ferry Road has grown tremendously in the past decade, the Owens said. Weekly meetings often draw in a crowd of more than 400 people.

In addition, “the whole culture of our church at White’s Ferry Road really changed,” Mac Owen said. The church “started reaching out to people that the rest of the community didn’t want to reach out to.”

That outreach, he added, had a positive effect on the church.

“When the drug addicts got here, they taught the rest of us how to be honest,” Mac Owen said.

The couple recently moved to Colorado to be closer to their children and grandchildren. But their home in Louisiana is a still a place where lives change for the better. The White’s Ferry Road church has turned the house into a recovery home — a place for addicts to come and live while they get sober.

In the battle against addiction, Mac Owen said that more churches need to come to the front lines, look past the stigma and find ways to be the hands and feet of Christ by serving those who can benefit from knowing the cross.

Unfortunately, he believes that many congregations are hesitant to do so — because they’re afraid of the word “recovery.”

In recovery, “we’re going to work with messy people,” he said. “When we finally figure out that — compared to Jesus, because he is the standard — we’re all messy people, then recovery doesn’t have to be scary.”
Knowing that drugs are harmful, why do people use them?

There are four main reasons why people use drugs:

• **Curiosity.** Daily, some people dream of peer acceptance due to a recognition-deprived childhood. Upon witnessing peer drug use, they become curious.

• **To feel good.** Now that they have experienced the euphoric high, they know how to feel good. This new feeling removes fear, anxiety, depression, loneliness, grief and paranoia.

• **To feel better.** This is also known as “chasing the high.” Once the euphoric high passes, the euphoric recall immediately enters the mind. As their tolerance increases, substance users chase the dope, no matter the cost. What used to be one pill every four to six hours has turned into 20 pills to avoid psychological and physiological withdrawal.

• **To perform better.** Some athletes take stimulants such as steroids (a.k.a. “gym candy”) to improve performance. The midnight-shift worker may revert to stimulants (amphetamines, crack cocaine) to stay awake.

To what degree are drug usage and addiction present in churches?

Drug use is everywhere and respects no one.

Growing up in a Christian family, I did not witness drugs and alcohol.

Upon entering full-time ministry at 24 years of age in 2004, my life changed. While serving as the minister in Corona, Calif., I injured my back in a car accident, which required a five-hour surgery.

While in the recovery room, I remember the nurse saying, “Mr. Holt, click this button to eliminate your pain.”

At that point, my life began to spiral downward. I rationalized and justified my behavior due to having a prescription. I traveled to multiple doctors (doctor shopping) until I was red-flagged. I was preaching every Sunday, visiting the sick, attending leadership meetings, baptizing souls, counseling — yet secretly battling for my life. I was scared to share my struggle for fear of losing my job.

The drugs made me believe my Savior had given up on me. Guilt and shame sent me into severe depression and embarrassment.

Looking back over my life, my life changed. While serving as the minister in Corona, Calif., I injured my back in a car accident, which required a five-hour surgery.

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HOLT: Learn the signs of addiction

FROM PAGE 21
wife’s leaving me was the best thing that ever happened. It forced me to wake up and apologize to God for accusing him of leaving me when, in actuality, I left him. I have been clean from prescription medication since 2009. This past June, my wife and I celebrated 13 years of marriage.

What should churches be doing to help fight this problem?
Churches can make a positive impact by helping those who cannot help themselves.
As a start, pray for God to remove silent discrimination. The average person, church member or leader will not admit to the silent battle within.
Several years ago, I dressed in disguise — I smelled bad, had holes in my clothes, smoke and dirt on me, had a shopping cart and brown bag with a bottle — and sat outside the church before service. People were afraid to speak to me.
I then moved to the auditorium. A member angrily stated, “If you do not leave, then I am calling the cops.” About then, a teenager sat next to me and said, “Welcome.”
When I stood up to preach, the sermon was already preached.
Here are a few more recommendations:
• Incorporate drug and alcohol education into your church’s budget.
• Host seminars and workshops on substance use disorders.
• Secure the professional services of a Licensed Chemical Dependency Counselor (LCDC) or Alcohol and Drug Counselor (ADC).
• Invite support groups such as Alcohols Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous to use your facility.
• Start a “Celebrate Recovery” ministry.
• Set up or find a free, anonymous hotline service and encourage church members to use it.

How can parents prevent drug usage by their teens?
There is nothing parents can do to ensure that their children will never use drugs. However, several precautionary measures can be utilized:
• Get educated about the signs and symptoms of drug-seeking behavior.
• Have a family meeting to communicate your policies and household expectations.
• Consider having a weekly “validation dinner” designed to demonstrate your love for your children.
• Keep your children busy with extracurricular activities.
• Involve yourself in their lives by attending school functions, meeting their friends, doing daily check-ins.
• Create “easy out” techniques designed to help your children leave the scene when offered drugs.
These simple steps can positively impact your children’s lives.

What can I do to help a friend or family member face their addiction problem?
Start praying today for God to use you to make a difference in their life.
This includes — but is not limited to — positive reinforcement, treatment referrals and intervention. You can hire professionals to help you host an intervention.
Remember that a substance use disorder is a chronic, lifelong brain disease that leads to destructive behavior. This disease is permanent, and anything can trigger a relapse.

IN WHAT NEW WAYS are teens abusing drugs? What should parents look for? See Brandon Holt Sr.’s answer at www.christianchronicle.org.

FOR MORE INFORMATION about Holt’s ministry, contact connectcocholt@gmail.com.
Elders of the Rochester Church of Christ in Minnesota pray for Debra Lawrence as she steps away from her role as Hands of Compassion hostess.

HONORED: Debra Lawrence, hostess for the Hands of Compassion ministry in Rochester, Minn. After 11 years of serving Mayo Clinic patients and families, Lawrence is stepping down and moving to the East Coast to be closer to family. The Rochester Church of Christ recognized her service and prayed for her as she departs. Kent and Barbara Risley, for 30 years of ministry with the Edmond Church of Christ in Oklahoma. Kent Risley has served as campus minister, associate minister and now executive minister.

PROMOTED: Jana Rucker, vice president for university communications and enrollment, Harding University, Searcy, Ark. Rucker added admissions and financial aid to her previous role overseeing communications and marketing.

NAMED: Gregory C. Swindle, as president and CEO for Hope for Life, a ministry of Abilene, Texas-based Herald of Truth. Swindle will assume his duties on Jan. 1, 2018, after a two-month transition period with the current CEO, Bill Brant. Swindle has ministered for Mississippi, Tennessee, Florida and Alabama churches and served as an Army National Guard chaplain. Emerald (Cardenas) Cassidy, as Abilene Christian University’s public and media relations director.
Donald Keith Rude 1936-2017

Donald Keith Rude passed from this life on June 22, 2017. At the time of his death, Don was surrounded by his wife, children and family who were reading scripture and singing songs of comfort and joy. Don was 80 years old.

He was born on Nov. 25, 1936, in Ambrose, N.D., to Lavern and Martha Mae Rude. In his childhood Don moved with his parents to Coeur d’Alene, Idaho. He graduated from Coeur d’Alene High School in 1954 and immediately joined the U.S. Navy. Following his tour with the Navy, Don returned to Coeur d’Alene and attended North Idaho Junior College where he studied auto mechanics.

While in school Don met Betty Pearson. They were married on Aug. 22, 1958. They would share in the joy of 58 years of marriage. During their life together God blessed Don and Betty with four children: Dan (Angie), Kent (Georgette), Jim (Diane) and Becky (Bill). Their children blessed them with 13 grandchildren and 20 great-grandchildren.

Don was a devout Christian and his faith influenced every aspect of his life. He was an elder at the Dalton Gardens Church of Christ in Idaho. He also was deeply supportive and involved in 180 Living, a ministry to downtown Coeur d’Alene. He served on the Idaho State Plumbing Board as well as the board of directors for Columbia Christian College. He loved to fish, travel, read his Bible, pray, worship and spend time with family and friends. He was a hardworking, astute businessman, but what he is remembered for mostly by his family and friends was his generous and caring spirit that flowed from his deep faith and commitment to Jesus Christ.

Kenneth Arthur “Bud” Stanley 1919-2017

Kenneth Arthur “Bud” Stanley was born on March 17, 1919, in Cleveland County, Okla., and passed away on July 31, 2017, in Tecumseh, Okla., at the age of 98. His parents were Author and Louisa Stanley, cotton farmers near Tribbey, Okla. He attended Red Oak and Tribbey schools, graduating in 1937.

Bud attended Murray State College and East Central College in engineering. He and Thearl L. Myers of Macomb, Okla., were married on Aug. 8, 1942, by his Grandpa Robert Fowler in Tecumseh City Park. He claimed he “put too much cotton in her sack!” He worked as an orderly in a Civil Conservation Corps camp during the depression. He retired from Tinker Field after 36 years as a machinist and supervisor. He dedicated himself to his church, family, and the community.

Bud retired after 30 years from Tecumseh’s volunteer fire department, delivering meals to the homebound, and serving as an election inspector. He drew up the preliminary plans for the present Golden Age Center where he enjoyed many domino games. He was chosen Frontiersman of Frontier Days in 1995.

He volunteered for a three-month tour of civilian duty in Viet Nam in 1967. He served as chairman of Action, Inc., for 20 years. He was a faithful member of the Highland Church of Christ in Tecumseh, Okla., where he served as a deacon and elder. He was instrumental in purchase of the current building site for the church.

Bud was preceded in death by his parents; an infant brother; his half-brother and his wife, and his beloved wife, Thearl, after 67 years of marriage.

Glenda Fay Winkley 1944-2017

Glenda Fay (Moore) Winkley finished her earthly race on August 12, 2017, with her family by her side at the finish line. She was born in Sweetwater, Texas, on April 30, 1944, to Cecil Arthur Moore and Vivian Marie Moore, better known as Dodaddy and Nonnie.

Glenda grew up in Andrews, Texas, where she met her future husband, Lloyd Winkley. In the 7th grade, Glenda saw Lloyd walking down the steps at church and told all her girlfriends, “I am going to marry that guy.”

She taught school as an elementary teacher for over 29 years. Glenda was a very active member of the Ozona Church of Christ and the Texas community as a whole. After retiring from education, Lloyd and Glenda enjoyed traveling, visiting grandkids, and enjoying life.

All through Glenda’s life she has been the embodiment of a positive attitude. Whether in an elementary class full of students, at the post office, or in church, Glenda always had a beautiful smile and contagious bright outlook on life. Those around her never heard her complain but rather listened to her ask about their day or respond to how she was doing by saying, “Good enough.” Glenda was such a shining example of how to courageously battle cancer. A large part of her attitude is contributed to her faith and belief in the Lord Jesus Christ and the knowledge that her earthly body was meant to be temporary, and her “REAL” reward is in heaven.

Steve Leo Allen, 84, Aug. 27, Edmond, Okla.

Dorothy Jane Peters, 64, Aug. 4, Mesquite, Texas.

Memorial/Honor Gifts

The Christian Chronicle appreciates and acknowledges generous gifts received in honor of Bobby Ross, Jr. and in memory of Donald Keith Rude.

Honoring Dr. Jim Beyer

Dr. Jim Beyer was honored post-humously with his induction into the LCU Social Work Hall of Honor during a luncheon on Thursday, Sept. 7, 2017, at Lubbock Christian University for his work as professor of Psychology and his pioneering vision, initiative, and implementation of the thriving social work academic degree program at LCU. After the program was begun in 1983 and then accredited in 1989, Dr. Beyer became the chair, overseeing and hiring many of the current staff and faculty. One of those current faculty members, Tony Parnell, spoke at the luncheon, reflecting on his few years with Dr. Beyer and the friendship and mentoring relationship he experienced as Dr. Beyer’s faculty colleague. Along with Parnell, Dr. Don Williams and President Tim Perrin shared their memories of Dr. Beyer’s pioneering spirit that took the social work program from its humble beginnings to the very successful academic program that serves current students.

Dr. Beyer was inducted into the LCU Social Work Hall of Honor to celebrate his great dedication and contribution to the LCU program and the profession. A special moment for the family occurred as current LCU social work major Taylor Haynes, granddaughter of Jim and Louise Beyer, read the inscription on the Hall of Honor induction plaque to the luncheon gathering. In attendance to honor their friend and mentor were several LCU alumni social work majors, as well as several former faculty colleagues of Dr. Beyer.

Entries should be submitted to milestones@christianchronicle.org or call (405) 425-5071.
Rates and guidelines are available upon request (credit card preferred).
The good in the bad

Hurricanes Harvey and Irma have brought out the best in Christians in Texas, Florida and beyond who are serving victims with love and compassion.

From organizing a “Hurricane Bucket Challenge” to feeding 5,000 — hot dogs, not fish — Churches of Christ are finding creative ways to help after Harvey and Irma.

The Gospel of John ends (21:25) by noting: “Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written.”

To make a modern-day application, if The Christian Chronicle were to report all that congregations and individual Christians are doing to help the battered Lone Star and Sunshine states, even all the newsprint in the U.S. would not have room for the stories that would be written.

In this issue of the Chronicle, we provide just a glimpse of the huge difference that Christians are making. To all those acting as Jesus’ hands and feet, we applaud you and thank God for you.

He went on his way home, rejoicing

When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing.

— Acts 8:39, New International Version

If God gives awards for church attendance, Rob will have a chest full of blue ribbons.

In June of 1968, the Churches of Christ in Denver were having a joint campaign in the downtown civic center. We went each night. People were responding and being immersed in a portable baptistery. Rob sat in his wheelchair. Every night he tugged on his dad’s coat, pointing to the front, indicating that he want to respond to the invitation.

At the last service, he was so persistent that Bob finally whispered to him, “After the meeting, we will go to our church building, and you can be baptized.”

We went with a group of friends to the University Boulevard church. Amid tears of joy, our minister, Max Hughes, and Rob’s dad immersed him into Christ. Like the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8, I think Rob went on his way home rejoicing.

Rob had to tell his sister, who was away at college in Nashville, Tenn. He used his electric typewriter. It had a guard over the keyboard so his one-finger, erratic hand movements would not jam the keys. Putting his finger through the guard and into the correct key hole was a challenge. As he tried, his head would throw back to the right, making it impossible to see the keyboard. He often missed the mark. These were the days before “delete” keys, so the only way to correct a mistake was to backspace and slash over the error. Much effort went into this short letter:

Dear Glenda: I was to be baptized June 23, 1968. I ha 2 be Chris am a Christian. Bro. Hughes A and Daddy have Chair and Ginny baptized me in a chair. Tell Ginny. Love R Rob.

Glenda picked up the letter at the school post office and was reading it as she walked along. Dan Kirby happened to be walking beside her and said, “Beautiful day, isn’t it?” She then ran off to her dorm room, crying.

A few days later, she sought out Dan to apologize and shared the letter. She explained about her brother’s cerebral palsy and his baptism. (Dan, by the way, is now Glenda’s husband.)

In spite of not being able to participate actively in church, Rob was well-known and loved by so many people. He loved to sing and, without understandable speech, he would sing out in his own language.

Being aware that it could be distracting to some, I tried to get him to sing softly. Then a friend reminded me that God hears the heart, and he was singing from the heart.

Rob had a real love for the Lord. The influence of God’s people and the support of friends left a lasting imprint on his life. Being surrounded by loving church families helped him develop and use his talent for sharing joy with those around him.

Dottie Glenn Travis shares a smile with her son, Rob, the subject of her 2017 memoir, “R-O-B spells Joy.”

DOTTIE GLENN TRAVIS is the mother of Rob, a Christian with cerebral palsy. After the death of his father, Rob moved into a facility operated by Rainbow Omega, a faith-based nonprofit that cares for adults with developmental disabilities. Rob died in 2010 after a brief illness. His mother recounts his life in her 2017 memoir, “R-O-B spells Joy” from which this devotional was adapted. The memoir is available from the 21st Century Christian bookstore. Travis worships with the Brentwood Hills Church of Christ in Nashville, Tenn.

FROM OUR READERS

Response to ‘sound congregations’

Thank you Jerrie Barber for the creative way you shared your views (“Looking for a ‘sound congregation?’ You’d better skip the one in Corinth,” Page 29, September). From the first word to the last, I was intrigued because I have read Paul’s letters many times but never applied it to issues happening today. Very eye- and heart-opening! May God continue to help our church families seek his Holy Word.

JUDY HAYES | Dalton, Ga.
**Why should we care about Martin Luther?**

500 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH, the theology professor set out to reform the church, eventually using the Bible as his guide.

1. When our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ, says “Repent” he means that the entire life of believers should be a repentance.

2. This word cannot be understood as sacramental penance, that is, as the confession and satisfaction that are performed under the ministry of priests.

Those are the first two of the 95 Theses penned by Martin Luther 500 years ago this month.

Historians question the lore about Luther, a priest and professor, nailing a document to the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany, on October 31, 1517. He never recorded such a story.

But whatever the truth about the tale, there is no doubt that, with his 95 statements — composed in Latin and intended as propositions for debate among scholars — Martin Luther accidentally sparked a public controversy that eventually engulfed all of Europe and forever changed the world.

Thanks to the printing press and the advent of movable type, by December 1517, translations of the 95 Theses had been read by thousands.

**What did Luther want to debate?**

His primary target was the crass peddling of indulgences as a fundraising scheme. As historian James M. Kittelson explains, indulgences were “documents prepared by the church and bought by individuals either for themselves or on behalf of the dead.” In exchange for money, “the living purchaser or the deceased would be released from purgatory for a certain number of years.”

Pope Leo X dreamed of rebuilding St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome but needed money for the project. So, he commissioned preachers to travel through various parts of Europe selling indulgences. When the Dominican friar Johann Tetzel began hawking these passes out of purgatory just across the border from Luther’s home in Saxony, Luther felt compelled to speak and write against the practice.

Anyone who reads the “Disputation on the Power and Efficacy of Indulgences,” the actual title of the 95 Theses, soon realizes that Luther did not completely reject indulgences. For example, in Thesis 73 he stated that the Pope had every right to denounce “those who by any means whatsoever contrive harm to the sale of indulgences.”

However, in the years that followed, Luther did come to reject the right by which anyone, including the Pope, might overturn the clear teaching of Scripture. By then, Luther was done with simply questioning excessive practices. He was going to the heart of the matter by raising the issue of authority.

Luther’s commitment to the Bible alone as the authority for Christian faith and practice led him to reject the Catholic church’s teaching about salvation. It also led to his being excommunicated. The events that ensued make up some of the earliest chapters in the history of the Protestant Reformation.

It is tempting for believers who pursue a purely biblical Christianity to imagine that they owe no debt to Martin Luther and have no connection to the Reformation. But denying a dependence upon the past is a bit like a modern astronomer claiming that because he studies the stars and the planets he has no connection to Nicolaus Copernicus and his revolution.

If someone today insists on the centrality of Scripture, it is in part because he lives with the heritage of Luther and others like him.

Above all, Campbell pointed to the Protestant assertion that “the authority of the Holy Scripture is the highest,” and that the Bible “is the only infallible and all-sufficient rule.”

Campbell lamented that the heirs of the 16th century Reformation stopped short of identifying and practicing what he called “the ancient order of things,” the particulars of primitive Christianity. He also regretted that the various branches of Protestantism became exclusive little “popedoms.”

Still, Campbell always appreciated Luther’s eventual insistence on the authority of the Scriptures.

In his typical, over-the-top style, Luther once wrote: I’d like all of my books to be destroyed so that only the sacred writings in the Bible would be diligently read.

FRANK BELLIZZI, a longtime minister, is a Ph.D. candidate in American History at Texas Tech University in Lubbock. He and his wife, Michele, worship with the Church of Christ at The Colonies in Amarillo, Texas.
500 years later, would Luther Tweet?

BOOKS EXPLORE REFORMER’S LEGACY and relevance – plus threats to 21st century churches

For evangelical Christians, Oct. 31, 2017, marks a significant anniversary. On that day 500 years ago, a young German monk is said to have nailed a revolutionary document to the Castle Church door that launched the Protestant Reformation.

Although that story is likely apocryphal, all Christians should have an interest in the events that followed, for they largely set the stage for everything that has happened since in the Christian world.

A flurry of books this year recounts the Reformation and its legacy. One is a revised edition of “The Courage to be Protestant: Reformation Faith in Today's World” by David F. Wells, research professor at Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary.

Wells takes it as a given that Reformers recovered orthodoxy, biblical Christianity and argues that the evangelical church today must likewise return to that kind of faith in the face of modern challenges.

In the 16th century, the threat was the Roman Catholic Church, Wells writes, but today the threat comes primarily from two groups. One, the “Church Marketers,” is guided by business practices and consumerism. The second, the “Emergents,” is led by postmodern language. (At one point, he even uses the language of Instagram, mentioning “selfie faith.”)

These two menaces, Wells writes, have led the church astray on essential matters such as truth, God, self, Christ, and the church.

Armed with up-to-date cultural research, eye-popping polling data and sad anecdotes ripped from the headlines, Wells delivers a scathing critique of these systems and contends that evangelicals simply need to return to biblical Christianity and have the courage to stand against the cheap imitations.

Wells provides keen insights into the underpinnings of the massive changes taking place in American culture, specifically regarding sexuality and marriage, and how many evangelical Christians could be swept up into it.

In a chapter that will be of special interest to members of Churches of Christ, Wells takes aim at evangelicalism’s individualistic streak that has downplayed the local church.

He points to the Reformers’ discovery of biblical preaching, attention to the sacraments and practice of church discipline as an antidote to an impoverished ecclesiology.

Wells’ book is to be commended for its stimulating and extremely insightful explanation of what is going on in American evangelical Christianity and how Reformation themes remain relevant today.


Metaxas, a popular radio talk show host, has authored acclaimed biographies of William Wilberforce and Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Metaxas has a keen ability to bring to life heroes of the past in a way that truly inspires modern believers.

He spends the first chapter explaining Luther’s importance by connecting him to the civil rights movement, the rise of toleration and even the American experiment in democracy. In addition to Luther’s deep knowledge of Scripture and longing for God, the monk’s rigorous intellect and stubborn and tenacious personality made him the right man at the right time to lead a movement that truly changed the world, Metaxas writes.

On display in this biography is Metaxas’ skill as a storyteller who has an eye for the details of a person’s life. He captures the imagination of the average reader in vivid and contemporary language. (At one point, he compares one of Luther’s letters to a modern-day, midnight Tweet.)

Particularly interesting is his lengthy description of Luther’s marriage to Katie, which for Metaxas, shows how the Reformer not only rediscovered a biblical view of sexuality, but also an appreciation for everything related to being human.

Metaxas’ book is more than just a biography of Luther. It also serves as a primer on late medieval Christianity, for in telling Luther’s story he guides the reader through his religious world, a place abounding with superstition and scholasticism, demons and monks, spiritual and moral corruption, as well as deep and genuine longing for God.

We in Churches of Christ generally admire Luther’s rebellion against the medieval Church’s corruption and respect his courage, but we still hold much against him. After all, some of his fundamental beliefs are counter to some of our core convictions.

But on this point Metaxas does us a favor: he reminds us that, in spite of his faults — and Luther had plenty of them — modern Christians can still become better disciples of Jesus by knowing his story.

And that is where Metaxas shines. He successfully navigates the extremes of hero worship and historical vilification and presents us with a sympathetic-yet-critical biography of a truly amazing person who altered events of history through his courageous and amazing faith.

If your goal is to get a better appreciation of Luther in this 500-year anniversary of the Reformation, Metaxas’ readable and enjoyable book is a great place to start.
## Job Listings

### Full-time Evangelist

Okeham Church of Christ in Okemah, Okla., is searching for a full-time minister with a love for evangelism. Candidates should have genuine love for people spanning from young to elderly to be willing to visit shut-ins and make hospital visits. We are a congregation of approximately 70 with the desire to be involved in the community while spreading the Word of God. Please send resume and three references to:

- **Okeham Church of Christ**
- **Attn: Elders**
- **PO Box 407, Okemah, OK 74859**
- **bsrbgreen@sbcglobal.net**

### Pulpit Search Committee

- **1000 N Newcomb**
- **Porterville, CA 93257**
- **church@pvcoc.org**
- **(559) 784-5498 or (559) 361-1198**

### Spiritual Leader

Small congregation needs spiritual leader to help teach us and spread the Word. Currently we do not have any elders, and all church business is overseen by a three-man committee. A large mobile home parsonage is available; hours and salary negotiable. If you are interested in learning more, please send resume to:

- **Eastwood Church of Christ**
- **4199 US 80**
- **Haughton, LA 71037**
- **timothy.sprague@us.af.mil**

### Preacher Search

- **Central (Texas)**

Small congregation in Normangee, Texas, is seeking a minister to help guide our growth and knowledge of our Lord. Local minister has retired. We are located 12 miles from Hilltop Lakes, Texas (golf, fishing, boating, camping, etc.), and 33 miles from Bryan. We have less than 40 members, no elders, and 15 children who are ready to serve. Our roots are deep and more than 100 years old. Please send resume and questions to:

- **wophoto@windstream.net**

### Lakeview Christian Hospice Care, Carlsbad, N.M.

Lakeview Christian Hospice Care, Carlsbad, N.M., has a unique opportunity for ministry. We are seeking a full-time chaplain to work with our dying patients and their families. This position allows you to minister to people at a sometimes difficult time, listen to family life reviews and hear incredible stories, and support patients and families. Must be willing to work in patient’s home, work comfortably in a multi-denominational environment, have knowledge of the grief process and an understanding of hospice philosophy.

- **Cindy Defer (575) 887-0933**
- **humanresources@lakeviewchristian.com**

### Pulpit Minister

The Southside Church of Christ in Tucson, Ariz., is seeking a pulpit minister. We are a congregation of 90+ with elders. We are seeking a man who loves the Lord, is energetic and has experience growing a congregation. We prefer a senior/seasoned minister, but all who meet our qualifications will be considered. Candidates can submit resumes to:

- **Southside Church of Christ**
- **PO Box 26624**
- **Tucson AZ 85726-6624**
- **southsideoctucson@gmail.com**

### Full-time Associate Minister

The Exchange Street Church of Christ is seeking a full-time associate minister with an emphasis on youth and young adults. We are a congregation of approximately 170 with five elders and 20 deacons and ministry leaders. Compensation and benefits will be commensurate with the candidate’s level of education and years of experience. Please submit a resume, cover letter, three references and two recent sermon samples for consideration.

- **Jeff Kenee, (731) 885-1507**
- **420 Exchange St**
- **Union City, TN 38261**

**Deadline for next two issues: October 6 and November 3.**

**Contact:** Tonya Patton at: tonya.paton@christianchronicle.org.

Visit our online listings at: www.christianchronicle.org/classifieds.
College of Arts and Sciences
Dr. Gregory Straughn, Dean, ACU Box 29210, Abilene, Texas 79699-9210

The Department of Language and Literature invites applications for a nine-month, tenure-track position as assistant professor beginning January 2018. Candidates are expected to have a terminal degree in English, comparative literature, humanities, or a closely related field. Specialization in composition-rhetoric is preferred. All members of the department teach a mix of composition and literature classes, from first-year writing to graduate courses in our English M.A. program; hence, evidence of a varied teaching background also is preferred. Applicants must have strong communication skills and interest in the development of students. Information about the department is available at acu.edu/english.

School of Social Work
Dr. Tom Winter, Director, ACU Box 27866, Abilene, Texas 79699-7866

The School of Social Work invites applications and/or nominations for a tenure-track position with appointment possible in January or August 2018. Rank is open, depending on the qualifications and experience of the candidate. The successful candidate will be expected to teach at the graduate and undergraduate levels. Administrative assignment is possible for experienced candidates. ACU’s School of Social Work offers the Bachelor of Science in Social Work (B.S.S.W.) and the Master of Science in Social Work (M.S.S.W.).

See acu.edu/academics/provost/positions.html for a complete description of this position. In a letter to the appropriate dean or chair, applicants should address their qualifications for the position. They should include in the application a statement of how faith informs their teaching; a discussion of their spiritual journey; a curriculum vitae; 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. Application instructions and descriptions of each position are available at oc.edu/hr. ACU is committed to diversity and inclusion in all aspects of its work, including faculty hiring. People from diverse backgrounds are urged to apply. Application must include a statement of how faith informs their teaching; a curriculum vitae; transcripts of all undergraduate and graduate work; and names, addresses and phone numbers of five references.
Panera and Psalms: Where do you find much-needed reflection?

I recently read a Wall Street Journal feature on Ron Shaich, founder of Panera Bread Co. He had just sold the business and was thinking about his future.

“I’ve watched both my mom and dad pass away,” he said. “I learned we each have an opportunity if we have a chronic disease to reflect on our own lives. But I am convinced that the time to reflect is not in the ninth inning, on your death bed. It’s while you are going through life.”

His words struck a familiar chord for me. For 17 years, I have gone each morning to Panera for coffee, breakfast, meditation and reflection. No matter what my responsibilities or position, I have taken the first hour of my day to reflect on what was ahead and how I needed to shape my attitude and behavior.

The Bible is rich with examples of people who took time to reflect. David, the psalmist, spent much of his youth alone with his sheep. He reflected on life and saw God as his shepherd who protected and cared for his needs (Psalm 23). When he was anointed king, he was in constant danger from Saul and his followers. He reflected on God as rock and redeemer when he was saved from a near-death experience (Psalm 18).

The book of Psalms is where I go when I need inspiration for reflection. The psalms are a varied tapestry of life experiences and emotions. God clearly blessed David with a perceptive heart and mind to help him explore celebration and danger in life. Working my way through Psalms each year has increased my sensitivity to God’s presence and work in my life.

Biblical texts can encourage reflection, but life experiences and emotions require reflection as well. Recently, I had lunch with my youngest grandchildren, Connor and Garrett. They are in their mid-teens and were facing the start of another school year. I have been reflecting on how much they have changed since they were my roommates in Rome last year. Both have grown up a lot, and both are seriously dedicated to wrestling. I am reflecting on how I can best love and help them through this stage of life. This reflection leads to prayer and a search for God’s guidance.

As an octogenarian, I am reminded often of death because so many people I have loved and admired are ill or dying.

I have never feared death, but I am certainly not eager to experience it. Reflections on death remind me of the many unfinished tasks of my life. My reflections prompt me to work on tasks that I can complete.

As an optimist, I am still dreaming and planning during my times of reflection. I am trying to recreate myself after retiring from college teaching after 57 years. I am trying to find meaning after losing the wife of my youth after 59 wonderful years.

I don’t have any idea how long I will live, but I am determined that every minute God gives me will be used to enrich the lives of others.

Reflection is not easy if it is not already a habit. It takes time and isolation. The best way to cultivate the practice of reflection is to set aside time most days of the week to think and consider the events and people in your life. Many find it useful to have a pen and paper to make notes. Many find it useful to begin with a Bible passage and let their minds absorb the ideas until they are reflecting on life.

Your heart and soul will flourish if you give yourself time to reflect.
Sharing the news in South Sudan

New Christians in Juba, Sudan, read an issue of The Christian Chronicle just months before the small town in East Africa became the capital of a new nation, South Sudan, in 2011. The men are part of a Church of Christ planted by Isaac Adotey, a missionary from the West African nation of Ghana. Send us your favorite photos of Chronicle reading — wherever you roam — and look for them here in future issues. Email your high-resolution images to erik@christianchronicle.org.

TO OUR READERS

How $20 can teach a lesson

An Air Force colonel once taught me a humbling lesson about accepting generosity. It was the summer of 1961 and I was in Kaiserslautern, Germany, as a missionary’s assistant.

As a student, I had very little money, but no complaints. I was blessed with many great Christian examples — both German and U.S. military. (Military personnel have done so much to advance and strengthen God’s Kingdom around the world. I saw a lot of that.)

By summer’s end, I was completely out of money. Had I not eaten at the table of Peggy Novak, whose husband I was serving, I would not have eaten at all. On my last Sunday, as people were leaving the building and wishing me well, Col. Albert Lovelady put a $20 bill in my hand and said, “Enjoy Paris on your way home.”

Are you kidding? Twenty whole dollars! I did some math. That’s like getting $163 in today’s money. I could eat, catch a cab to see the Eiffel Tower and then eat again!

Fifty-six years later, I haven’t forgotten Col. Lovelady’s generosity — and what he taught me about the importance of giving.

It was a profound lesson.

When you give to The Christian Chronicle, it is equally profound — whether you give $20, $163 or more. You’re giving to more than a newspaper; you’re giving to thousands of Christians around the world by helping us make inspiring stories of Christian people and ministries come to life.

Thank you once again for your generosity. We humbly accept.

CONTACT: lynn.mcmillon@christianchronicle.org

Why I support

Because we need to know

Did you know that 111 donors (individuals, couples and families) have contributed to The Christian Chronicle for 20 consecutive years — or more? Louise Clites is one of them. The mother of four — and an inspiration to eight grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren — has dedicated her life to spreading God’s Word through missions.

About 40 years ago, she met workers with a newly formed ministry, Health Talents International, in Birmingham, Ala. Members of Churches of Christ formed the nonprofit to bring physical and spiritual healing to the people of Latin America.

Charles Bates, a church elder and one of Health Talents’ founders, invited Clites to join a mission team bound for Guatemala.

“I went on one trip, and I was hooked,” she said.

That’s putting it lightly. In the past 37 years, Clites has participated in 17 mission trips to Guatemala, 15 to Nicaragua, 11 to Honduras and one to Belize. She’s worked with medical ministries including Health Talents, Predisan and Mision Para Cristo.

The New Jersey-native majored in biology and chemistry at Milligan College in Johnson City, Tenn. She’s used her degree in clinical laboratory science on the mission field. Clites has attended the Central Church of Christ in Johnson City for 30 years. She worshiped alongside her husband of 25 years, Roger.

Why do you read The Christian Chronicle?

“I definitely felt I needed to support it if I was going to be reading it. I eagerly read any article about any of those countries I’ve talked about, been to and been a part of. We need to know about other works within the brotherhood. We aren’t a little puddle over here by ourselves.”

Help us share the news! Send your tax-deductible gift by check to The Christian Chronicle, P.O. Box 11000, Oklahoma City, OK 73136-1100; use our online form at www.christianchronicle.org or call us at (405) 425-5070.
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