A one-time traveling salesman born in small-town Kentucky before the start of the Civil War moved to Nashville, Tenn., in the early 20th century and started a successful apparel company.

In its heyday, R.W. Comer’s Washington Manufacturing Co. — best known for its DeeCee work clothing — employed more than 20,000 workers in two dozen-plus factories across the South.

Now, 75 years after Comer’s death, a trust that he and his sons established to benefit Churches of Christ is about to pay major dividends — roughly $35 million in all — to congregations in the two states that he called home.

A cappella Churches of Christ in Tennessee and Kentucky will split proceeds from the fund established by the Comer family in 1936, The Christian Chronicle has learned.

“Every qualifying Church of Christ in Tennessee and Kentucky will receive a letter containing instructions, which must be followed within the allotted time in order to receive a distribution from the Trust,” said William Tucker, assistant vice president for the major gift program and estate planning support at Freed-Hardeman University in Henderson, Tenn.

“Every congregation, whether large or small, will receive the same amount from the Comer Trust,” Tucker added.

The Owen Chapel Church of Christ in Brentwood, Tenn., is one of about 2,000 congregations that will split roughly $35 million from the Comer Trust. Established in 1859, the church had separate entrances for men and women. Restoration Movement leader David Lipscomb preached for the church, which now has about 28 members.

BY BOBBY ROSS JR. | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

TERRELL, Texas

Jack Evans Jr. rose from his seat on the front row of the Graham-Kennedy-Farmer Auditorium at Southwestern Christian College. Dressed in a black suit with a white shirt and tie, the oldest son of Jack Evans Sr. — one of the most influential African American preachers in the history of modern-day Churches of Christ — approached his father’s coffin.

Evans Jr. picked up the open Bible that rested atop the closed casket — his dad’s Bible. Then the brokenhearted progeny stepped on stage to memorialize his 81-year-old father, who served for nearly 50 years as president of the only historically black higher education institution associated with Churches of Christ.

“Y’all knew him as the president and the preacher and the crusade speaker,” Evans Jr. told a capacity crowd of 1,500 Christians who filled the auditorium 30 miles east of Dallas. “But to us, he was just Daddy, and we’re going to miss him tremendously.”

Evans Sr. was a Houston native who

BY BOBBY ROSS JR. | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

THANKS TO A CHURCH ELDER who died 75 years ago, about 2,000 congregations in Tennessee and Kentucky will split $35 million.
PREACH THE WORD EVERY ONE DAY PLACE WAY

SUNSET VISION WORKSHOP
JANUARY 22-25, 2020

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS
TRUITT ADAIR
GARY BRADLEY
TIM BUROW
FERMAN CARPENTER
RUSS CROSSWHITE
JEFF JENKINS
PHIL SANDERS
THOMAS L THOMAS
In Sin City, some work in casinos but don’t gamble

LAS VEGAS

I hit the jackpot on a recent Sunday.

No, I didn’t win big money at the slot machines or blackjack tables. Since I don’t gamble, that would be impossible.

But I did strike it rich in terms of how to spend the Lord’s Day in Sin City: I enjoyed time in worship and fellowship with fellow Christians.

“Wow, that’s a big building,” Larry Sullivan, my brother in Christ, said when he arrived at the 30-floor Westgate Las Vegas Resort & Casino.

Sullivan was driving a North Las Vegas Church of Christ van full of mostly older ladies from the church. They’d added an extra stop to their normal route to pick up this out-of-town visitor from The Christian Chronicle.

I had traveled to the Entertainment Capital of the World for the Religion News Association’s 70th annual meeting at the Westgate.

One of the thought-provoking sessions at the religion writers’ meeting was a panel discussion on “Saving Souls in Sin City: The Secret Life of Ministry in the Party City.”

The speakers were J.B. Myers, elder and minister for the Bright Angel Church of Christ; Imam Fateen Seifullah, a former Baptist

Christian Chronicle over a traditional Swedish breakfast of Kalles Kaviar — a paste made from cod, squeezed from a tube over hard boiled eggs.

Here, winning souls for Christ can take years.

For Opoku’s wife, Gabrielle, it took more than a decade.

“I was, as many other Swedes are, suspicious,” said Gabrielle Opoku, a tall, blonde-haired native of Stockholm. “People warn you, ‘Oh, don’t become too much into God or church. They will brainwash you.’”

Until she met her future husband, “I didn’t have any Christian friends,” she said. “I didn’t understand the depth of Christianity.”

Now the couple and their children, Jessie, 22, and Immanuel, 17, serve a
who converted to Islam in 1988; Rabbi Sanford Akselrad, spiritual leader of a Jewish congregation; and Annie Lobert, a sex-trafficking survivor who serves as president of the evangelical Christian ministry Hookers for Jesus.

“Please don’t take our name wrong,” Lobert said. “It’s basically based on Matthew 4:19: ‘I will teach you how to fish for people.’”

I appreciated Myers, whom I met on a previous reporting trip to Vegas, accepting the invitation to address the group. In his introductory remarks, he told the writers that “the reputation of Las Vegas far exceeds the reality.”

“The only thing I’ve noticed is that we do have a lot of gambling here,” the Bright Angel preacher said. “The gambling industry is very large and important to the community. It provides a lot of jobs.”

Gaming had a $67.6 billion economic impact on the state last year, according to the Nevada Resort Association. Leisure and hospitality positions account for more than one in every four jobs statewide.

“People who want to come and spend their money — they’re welcome to come and support the economy,” Myers said.

He likened a $3,000 gambling weekend in Vegas to someone buying a fancy bass boat in Texas or going on an expensive hunting trip in Colorado.

“I can’t find anywhere in the Bible where it says risking an amount of money in a game of chance is a sin,” he added.

He argued that wagering is only a problem if it leads to destructive behavior such as an inability to pay one’s bills. And that does become an issue for some, noted Myers, who works to help Christians overcome gambling addictions.

With a population of 3 million, Nevada has only 28 Churches of Christ — with a total of about 2,600 men, women and children in the pews each Sunday, according to a national directory published by 21st Century Christian.

The North Las Vegas church building is about nine miles north of the famous stretch of hotels, casinos and resort properties known as “The Strip.” The predominantly black congregation averages Sunday attendance of about 200.

I first visited that congregation when it hosted the West Coast Preachers and Leaders Forum in 2011. The forum, started in San Francisco in 1964, rotates to a different city each year. It will return to the North Las Vegas church Jan. 26-30, 2020.

Many in the church work in the gaming industry.

Still, North Las Vegas minister Leo G. Gay preaches that gambling is a sin. But as Gay sees it, that doesn’t preclude a person from earning an honest living in a casino.

He compares such employment to a grocery store clerk who rings up alcoholic beverages but doesn’t drink.

“I definitely do not believe in gambling,” said Wanda Williams, a longtime North Las Vegas member and casino worker who greeted me between Bible class and worship.

“The Bible says we are to work for our money, not gamble for it.”

After a service that featured jubilant hymns such as “Get Right, Church” and “Salvation Has Been Brought Down,” I joined Gay and a few other Christians for lunch at a nearby steakhouse.

Sitting directly across from me was Alberta Moreland, who has dealt cards at a casino for four decades.

“How much money have you won in 40 years?” Gay asked her with a wink.

“None,” she replied, smiling. “I’m a dealer, but I don’t gamble.”

BOBBY ROSS JR. is editor-in-chief of The Christian Chronicle. Reach him at bobby.ross@christianchronicle.org. Follow him on Twitter at @bobbyross.
ALABAMA

ENTERPRISE — For the first time, all four of this city’s Churches of Christ recently came together to host a citywide gospel meeting at the Enterprise Civic Center.

The four-day event featured the theme “Good News in Bad Times.” The evangelistic outreach involved the predominantly black Adams Street and Southside congregations and the predominantly white Pinedale and College Avenue congregations.

Volunteers from all four churches knocked on doors and distributed leaflets promoting the meeting, said James Baker, an elder of the College Avenue congregation.

“This was the first time in Enterprise history that all four congregations of the Lord’s church came together in a common cause for such a big event,” Baker said. “It is definitely not the last. We are already planning for our next citywide outreach.”

INDIANA

ROCHESTER — At 5:14 p.m. each Thursday, the Rochester Church of Christ feeds about 20 to 25 teenagers from the community.

The “5:14 Teen Ministry” is tied to Matthew 5:14, which says, “Let your light shine before others.”

The gathering begins with an activity, followed by a short devotional thought and then dinner, minister Jim Dillinger said.

About 10 church volunteers take turns working with the teens.

“We are sharing Christ with a group of teens that is usually ignored by most of society, including too many churches,” Dillinger said. “Once you get past the very rough exterior, there are some pretty neat kids who are needing someone to care about them.”

NORTH CAROLINA

STATESVILLE — For the first time in 50 years, the century-old Abilene Church of Christ has elders.

Leon Cash and Robert English were appointed recently to serve as shepherds, along with deacon Randy Bridges.

“We have had some old members returning and one new convert,” minister Dave Olson said of the congregation’s successes.

TEXAS

ABILENE — A stretch of the Minda Street Church of Christ’s namesake road has been renamed “Dr. Tony Roach Street” in recognition of the congregation’s founding minister.

Perhaps having Mayor Anthony Williams as a member speeded the process, the Abilene Reporter-News reported. The church recently celebrated its 40th anniversary.

“The faith, love and devotion of the founders of the congregation — to the Word of God and to Jesus as Lord and Savior — continues to live on in the hearts of those who make up the Oak Grove congregation today,” minister Don Davis said.

“Baptism by immersion continues to be practiced, and the Lord’s Supper is offered every Sunday,” he added. “The congregation still has a cappella singing.”

The church of 120 members is led by three elders, six deacons and two ministers. Through the years, the congregation has met in homes, schoolhouses and several different church buildings.

In 1950, a church building was constructed on Fourth Street in Rincon and served as the congregation’s home for nearly seven decades. In 2018, the church moved to its present location at 2000 Lexington Ave. in Rincon.

“Past and present members came together in a heartfelt time of reminiscing and thanksgiving,” Davis said of the bicentennial celebration.

A narrated PowerPoint presentation was given and can be seen at rinconchurchofchrist.com.
No one expected wooden crosses to tower 20 feet in the air at Lubbock Christian University in Texas. No one expected Aaron Price to be the artist. But out of the ashes, a masterpiece was born.

Price, 43, has battled mental illness for years — in and out of hospitals — and describes his journey as “long and hard and confusing.”

A member of the Green Lawn Church of Christ in Lubbock, he saw his first psychologist at age 17 and got a prescription.

As a student-athlete in high school, Price never pictured himself as an artist. He didn’t create his first painting until he was 36. Soon after, he began to work with his hands, teaching himself carpentry and welding.

“It just came out of nowhere,” Darrell Price, also a Green Lawn member, said of his son’s artistic flair. “I think it’s about God trying to be revealed through him after all this. It’s kind of unexplainable, to tell you the truth, what he does. ... He’s inspired by the Holy Spirit to create the crosses.”

Aaron Price said the pain he experienced during the most difficult years of his life bolstered his faith. “You end up learning that some things that people see as odd or mentally impaired are gifts from God,” he said. “My walk with him is different than I ever could have dreamed it would’ve been growing up in the church.”

Clinging to their faith, Aaron Price’s parents, Darrell and Anita, and two sisters, Angie and Abby, stood by him through every mental health trial. Darrell Price recently retired from LCU after 43 years as a sports sciences professor and 10 years of coaching.

“We were affected by it, but it brought us closer together,” said Darrell Price, recalling that the family prayed for strength and wisdom day by day. “Christ is the glue that held us together. The ultimate story is bigger than the pain and the horror that’s going on.”

At LCU, Darrell Price worked with an intention to love his students, an ethic that did not go unnoticed by his son. Aaron Price cites his father as the main inspiration for building his four-cross sculpture. He attempted to keep the piece a surprise from his father until construction workers dug a giant hole right outside of Darrell Price’s office, making the sculpture impossible to ignore.

“My son said, ‘I just wanted to do it for him and something for him to be remembered by — for all the service he’s given to the school and his focus on trying to help people,’” said Aaron Price, who also designed a cross that he placed at his successful business, Blue Sky Kennel in Lubbock. “He always had his eyes open for people who were struggling, especially after my struggle.”

As far as mental health is concerned, Darrell Price said he was more judgmental in the past than he would be now, especially in a society where “people who were mentally ill were just supposed to get tough and out of bed.”

Now, his goal is to encourage people with children who have mental illnesses.

“Over the years, we have tried to encourage and help people because we have had so much experience with that,” Darrell Price said. “I love (Aaron), and he loves me, and I’ve always got his back.”

But the crosses represent more than just a dedication to his father. One cross leaning behind the others symbolizes Aaron Price’s personal walk with Christ and desire to follow Jesus.

“Hope is always there, even when you don’t believe there’s any hope,” Aaron Price said. “I spent a lot of days on the edge between suicide and making it one more day, and somehow he held on to me.”

Said Darrell Price: “The miracle of his faith expressed through his art, we pray, brings all glory to God and offers hope to the multitude of families with children having similar struggles.”

MORE PHOTOS: christianchronicle.org
The CHALLENGE: 20,000 in 2020

Truth for Today World Mission School is sending 20,000 commentaries — 10,000 sets of *The Life of Christ, 1 & 2* — to preachers and teachers in sub-Saharan Africa. These two volumes contain 1,288 pages of the essential gospel message to convert and ground the recipients in the faith.

The SOLUTION:

**Pray:** Make January 12, 2020, a day of prayer for the continent of Africa! Please pray for the recipients of these books as they boldly preach the gospel to the people in their nations.

**Carry Books:** If you are traveling to Africa at any time during the year 2020, will you take one or more sets of these commentaries and place them in the hands of preachers and teachers who will use the books to teach others about Christ?

If you know of any others going to Africa, please send us their contact information.

**Donate:** To donate, please go to biblecourses.com/support. For further inquiries, see our contact information below, left.

“The books are great. They are very touching and understandable. They are very good learning tools to help share with others and to win more souls for Christ. They also help me to be able to teach a class and train local church leaders.”

— Bolgatanga, Ghana

“God bless you as you are reaching the unreached.”

— Nairobi, Kenya

Truth for Today World Mission School, Inc.
2209 Benton, Searcy, AR 72143
(501) 268-7588 • www.biblecourses.com
lifeofchriststudies@biblecourses.com

“Into all the world for the rest of time”
**EVANS SR.: ‘He has finished his course. And he has kept the faith’**

**FROM PAGE 1**

moved to Nashville, Tenn., in the 1950s and became one of the famous black traveling evangelist Marshall Keeble’s “boy preachers.”

He died Nov. 1 after battling dementia.

“A giant has fallen,” declared Eugene Lawton, a contemporary of Evans Sr. and longtime minister for the Newark Church of Christ in New Jersey.

Lawton remembered his close friend as a “powerful preacher, prolific writer, defender of the faith (and) great debater.”

Lawton

**‘LIVE THE LIFE ... PREACH THE WORD’**

Evans Sr. led Southwestern from 1967 to the end of 2016, making him one of the longest-tenured presidents in U.S. higher education history.

“Live the life, and then preach the Word,” Evans Sr. said at a 2018 tribute to him at the Fifth Ward Church of Christ, the Houston congregation where he was baptized in 1953 at age 15. “If you don’t live the life, then the Word won’t really help you.”

Besides leading Southwestern, Evans Sr. was the main speaker for the national Crusade for Christ for many years.

Every two years since 1979, hundreds of members of Churches of Christ travel to a different major city for the crusade, which features a door-knocking campaign and a weeklong gospel meeting. However, health issues prevented Evans Sr. from keynoting the last few crusades, including the 40th anniversary event in Fort Worth, Texas, earlier this year.

“Dr. Jack Evans Sr. has fought a good fight. He has finished his course. And he has kept the faith,” said Shelton Gibbs III, minister for the Greenville Avenue Church of Christ in Richmond, Texas, referencing 2 Timothy 4:7. “He can now lay down his sword and shield and rest in peace, knowing that his work has not been in vain.”

Evans Sr. also distinguished himself as a master debater who vigorously defended his belief in the “one true church” against denominational pastors and leaders of non-Christian faiths, such as Islam.

“From the age of 16, Evans had been a towering figure in the pulpit,” said Ervin D. Seamster Jr., who succeeded Evans Sr. as Southwestern president in 2017. “As his education and training continued … his reverent, booming voice became one of his most recognizable instruments.

“Word of his undeniable prowess in the pulpit and his impressive knowledge of the Bible preceded Evans wherever he traveled. His popularity skyrocketed. Everyone who saw or heard Jack Evans knew this man was something special.”

His passing came just seven months after the March 31 death of Patricia Officer Evans, his wife of 60 years and the “queen mother” of Southwestern for decades. She was 77.

“He and my mother literally wore themselves out,” Evans Jr. said of his parents, whose other survivors include younger sons Herbert and David. “They gave everything they had to this brotherhood and Southwestern and their family.”

A TRAILBLAZING PRESIDENT

Originally known as the Southern Bible Institute in Fort Worth, Texas, Southwestern Christian College moved to Terrell — an East Texas town of 18,000 — in 1949. Southwestern’s campus previously housed the Texas Military Institute.

Roughly half the nation’s predominantly black Churches of Christ have ties — through a minister, elder, deacon or leader’s wife — to Southwestern, its administrators say.

Nationwide, there are 1,172 predominantly African American congregations, according to a national directory published by 21st Century Christian. Those congregations account for nearly 200,000 men, women and children in the pews on any given Sunday — or 14 percent of the 1.4 million total adherents of Churches of Christ in the U.S.

After graduating in 1957 from the Nashville Christian Institute, Evans Jr. enrolled at Southwestern.

In 1964, after earning a bachelor’s degree in history and religion at Eastern New Mexico University and a master’s degree in history and English at the University of Texas at El Paso, he returned to Southwestern as the academic dean and a history instructor. Three years later, at the height of the civil rights movement, he became the first black president of Southwestern. The first three presidents were white.

However, his trailblazing appointment didn’t please everyone.

Margaret Ivory is a 1978 Southwestern graduate and the wife of Leon Ivory, minister for the Hood Street Church of Christ in Waco, Texas. She said she and Evans Jr. — then children — were in the segregated room as the transition from white to black leadership occurred.

“I remember that night that there was one Anglo brother — that guy turned so red,” Margaret Ivory said. “Jack Jr. said he was scared. I was scared, too.

“That man said, ‘I declare that Southwestern Christian College is going to close in one year under Negro rule,’” she recalled. “My mother and all the ladies — who are probably now in their 80s and 90s — they took brother Evans into a room. He was a young man, and they said, ‘Brother Evans, we’re not going to allow this school to close.’

“And brother Evans believed those sisters. Most of the buildings you see here are because of the Bowser Women,” she said, referring to a group of supporters named after G.P. Bowser (1874-1950), a prominent black minister instrumental in Southwestern’s founding.

By 1973, Evans Sr. helped Southwestern obtain accreditation as a two-year junior college. In 1982, Southwestern began awarding four-year degrees in Bible and religious education. The college has remained fully accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

Through the decades, Southwestern — which has about 120 students — has faced repeated financial struggles. But Evans Sr. focused on his faith in God.

Asked in 2013 if the college might be in danger of closing, he told The Christian Chronicle, ‘That’s been an issue ever since we’ve been in
Jack Evans Jr., the oldest son of longtime Southwestern Christian College President Jack Evans Sr., preaches his father’s funeral. “I don’t have to eulogize him,” Evans Jr. said. “His life is his eulogy. Your presence ... is his eulogy.”

existence. ... I have just worked here based on the faith that it would get better, and I still believe it. I don’t live under the threat or the fear of closing.”

HIS ‘LIFE, LABOR AND LEGACY’

Two weeks after Evans Sr.’s passing, hundreds of gospel preachers and Southwestern alumni traveled from across the United States to remember him.

A Friday night, Nov. 15, celebration of his “life, labor and legacy” and his Saturday afternoon, Nov. 16, funeral both lasted for hours as minister after minister — and friend after friend — stepped to the microphone to pay tribute.

Daniel Harrison was one of Evans Sr.’s best friends. The two first met as students at the Nashville Christian Institute. They traveled with Keeble to gospel meetings and delivered short messages before he spoke.

“He preached the Gospel with enthusiasm and all his might,” said Harrison, longtime senior minister for that Chatham-Avalon Church of Christ in Chicago and recently retired director of the national Crusade for Christ. “He remained doctrinally sound, but not only sound — he loved preaching.”

At the funeral, the sweet smell of fresh flowers lining the stage in Evans Sr.’s memory permeated the auditorium.

The rumbling sound of trains passing on the tracks by the nearby intersection of Jack Evans Drive and Bowser Circle could be heard over the prayers and hymns such as “He Bore It All” and “Our God, He Is Alive.”

Evans Sr. “preached the word of God as if it were actually that — the word of God,” said Jefferson Caruthers Jr., minister for the Carver Road Church of Christ in Winston-Salem, N.C.

Gerald Lee, minister and elder of the Pearland West Church of Christ in Pearland, Texas, said: “He loved his family. He loved God. He loved the church. He loved SWCC. He loved his friends. And he loved humor.”

‘I’LL SEE YOU A LITTLE LATER’

God showed Evans Jr. mercy, the son said, by letting him return from preaching in Memphis, Tenn., in time to hold his father’s hand all day “while he was in transition.”

The two listened to Mahalia Jackson, Evans Sr.’s favorite singer, as his father stared straight ahead.

“One little tear came out of his eye. He knew I was there,” Evans Jr. said. “And I thank God that he gave me that time with my daddy.”

Evans Jr. delivered a passionate, 24-minute eulogy in which he referenced numerous Scriptures and principles that his father taught him. He paused only occasionally to regain his composure.

At the end, he lowered his voice, his words barely above a whisper.

“Daddy, it’s all right,” he said before sitting down. “I’ll see you a little later.”

Matthew 5:16 says, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”

In life, Jack Evans Sr. did just that.

He preached so hard that often he put on an overcoat after he shared the Gospel because he was soaking in sweat, and he needed to cover his body to retain the heat.

Evans Sr. was more than the president of Southwestern Christian College for nearly 50 years. He was a spiritual prize fighter with a mean left hook for the Lord. No matter where he preached or what event he attended, he gave everything he had to ministry and never backed down from delivering God’s word.

“Peter didn’t say, ‘Well, just say you’re sorry that you killed Jesus.’ He said, ‘Repent and be baptized’ — isn’t that right? — ‘for the remission of your sins,’” Evans Sr. boomed during the 2011 Crusade for Christ in Washington, D.C., where several people decided to be immersed one night.

After the service, Evans Sr. stood by the baptismal pool. I asked him why he preached so hard.

“I am not under my own orders. I am under the orders of God. The Bible says when a man speaks, let him speak from the oracles of God,” he replied, quoting from 1 Peter 4:11.

From Los Angeles to New York City, this devoted man of God will never be forgotten.

James O. Maxwell, the longtime vice president of Southwestern, said Evans displayed the same passion in working with students that he did in the pulpit. That’s why so many alumni — many of them gospel preachers — returned to East Texas to celebrate the life of this preacher, teacher and father who was indeed a mighty spiritual warrior.

“He would seldom make a mistake in his presentations because he really wanted excellence,” Maxwell told me hours before hundreds gathered to remember Evans Sr.

Jayon Hunter, a current Southwestern student, said he wanted to attend the funeral because Evans Sr. made such an impact on so many.

“He touched us in our ministry,” Hunter said. “He taught us, and he loved us.”

Countless others shared similar sentiments as they mourned this champion of the faith once delivered to the saints.

HAMIL R. HARRIS is a Christian Chronicle correspondent and veteran journalist. He preaches for the Glenarden Church of Christ in Maryland.
 Churches of Christ Support Massive Bible Campaign

Bibles for Millions involves Christians to fulfill Great Commission goals.

CEDAR PARK, Texas

As recently reported, the World Bible School Study Bible is experiencing broad receptivity among churches of Christ. Gifts to fund Bibles for others and Bible purchases have far exceeded expectations—so much so that WBS has embarked on an ambitious campaign to put one million Bibles into the hands of seekers.

“We’re very excited about the Bibles for Millions campaign!” reported John Reese, WBS president. “This Bible is an evangelistic tool like no other. It includes study helps that thoroughly outline a faithful response to the Gospel—including repentance and baptism (as compared to ‘the sinner’s prayer’). You won’t find a Bible like this at your local religious bookstore!”

The WBS Study Bible is the English Standard Version published by Crossway, a modern, accurate, and readable translation. A New King James edition should be available in April 2020. The WBS Study Bible is attractive, durable and inexpensive.

GIVE FOR BIBLES, OR BUY THEM

Individual gifts to WBS help ensure, first of all, that a WBS student somewhere in the world is connected with a WBS Study Helper for personal Bible study. Gifts specifically for Bibles for Millions help ensure that a WBS student will receive a free Bible of their own—often their very first.

Along with other donors who provide for shipping costs, a $100 gift funds 20 Bibles for the Bibles for Millions goal. Churches and individuals alike are buying WBS Study Bibles for a variety of uses:
• Pew Bibles
• Incentives for students in their WBS teaching program
• New converts
• Prison ministry
• Benevolence recipients
• Campaigns
• Presentation Bibles (e.g. graduating teens)
• Gifts for family and friends (including stocking stuffers!)

John Reese was quick to remind: “Remember that the WBS Study Bible has extensive, built-in tools for personally studying the Bible with people. Bibles for Millions is all about relationships.”

HONORING TEX WILLIAMS 1930 - 2019

Join Christians around the world in honoring the evangelistic legacy of Tex Williams. His 20 years at the helm of WBS is just one facet of a life dedicated to sharing the Good News of Jesus with a lost world (see this issue). You can give online or at the WBS address below.

Bibles for Millions

...is an effort to put one million WBS Study Bibles into the hands of seekers. You and your congregation can be a part of it.

HOW CAN I GIVE? Your gift connects a seeker with a WBS Study Helper for personal study and helps them get a free Bible.

CAN I BUY? Yes. Use Bibles for personal use and pews, as well as for gifts and as presentation Bibles.

P.O. Box 2169
Cedar Park, TX 78630
worldbibleschool.net/give

Content sponsored by World Bible School. Contact tonya.patton@christianchronicle.org for advertising opportunities.
TRUST: Every church will receive the same amount

FROM PAGE 1
Tucker noted in an email.
If $35 million were split equally among the 2,000 Churches of Christ in those two states, it would amount to $17,500 per congregation.

A trust fund letter received by multiple churches and reviewed by the Chronicle indicated that the trustee does not expect “appreciably more than 2,000” beneficiaries.

“I’m very thankful that he and his two sons had the foresight to set up the trust,” Jack S. Dugger Jr., the fund’s trustee, said of his great-grandfather and great-uncles. “Resources that were put into the trust have grown significantly over the last 70-plus years, and we’re able to now make a significant contribution to the congregations due to his generosity.”

Asked if he had any advice for how congregations should spend the money, Dugger, a 79-year-old former elder of the Brentwood Church of Christ near Nashville, chuckled.

“No, not really,” he replied. “But we would hope that at least part of it would go to some sort of mission work.”

A GRACIOUS BENEFACtor
In late September, Chancellor Louis W. Oliver III issued a final order in the Sumner County Chancery Court in Gallatin, Tenn., approving the trustee’s final determination of beneficiaries.

Robert Wickliffe Comer died on Aug. 5, 1944, at age 84. Comer ran the Washington Manufacturing Co. until becoming ill about five weeks before his death, according to an obituary published in The Tennessean.

The benefactor was a charter member of Nashville’s Chapel Avenue Church of Christ, where he served as an elder until his death. He also served on the board of what is now Lipscomb University: A January 1937 article in the Gospel Advocate noted that Comer gave a Bible to each of his 2,500 employees for Christmas.

A $200,000 donation that he made to Freed-Hardeman College as a permanent endowment led to the college’s accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, according to the letter sent to churches.

“I’ve researched brother Comer’s life over the years,” said Scott Harp, editor of TheRestorationMovement.com and minister for the Crittenden Drive Church of Christ in Russellville, Ky. “His name has come up time and again as a gracious and liberal benefactor of good works among Churches of Christ.

“By the appearances of his potential blessings even today, it seems that he being dead yet speaketh!” added Harp, making reference to Hebrews 11:4.

TRUSTEE EXPLAINS REASONING
According to the court order, R.W. Comer and sons Guy L. Comer and Mont B. Comer formed a trust in 1936 that was amended in 1941. The trust established three classes of beneficiaries. Class A and B recipients were family members.

“They have all received their full allotment from the Trust,” Tucker said in his email. “The trustee is now ready to distribute the remaining corpus.”

The Class C beneficiaries are Churches of Christ and related ministries. The court order explains that the churches receiving funds will be those deemed “loyal to the Church of Christ” as that description was understood when the trust was created.

Specifically, the order indicates that eligible congregations will be those listed in the “Churches of Christ in the United States” directory published by 21st Century Christian and identified as not incorporating instrumental music into any of their assemblies.

Since its beginning, the directory has denoted subgroups within the fellowship, including churches that use one cup in communion or practice mutual edification and oppose the use of paid ministers. But the publication’s 2009 edition omitted congregations that used instrumental music in at least one Sunday service.

However, those congregations were restored to the list in 2012. New codes were created that indicate “historically” a cappella churches that have added instruments to some or all Sunday assemblies. Those churches remain a small fraction of the 12,000 U.S. congregations included in the directory.

“There are a lot of factors involved,” Dugger said of the non-instrumental worship requirement for the trust money. “As you know, there have been a lot of changes in the various congregations of the Church of Christ over the years.

“That was certainly one thing that stood out when we researched churches that existed in the 1936 and 1941 time span,” he added. “They worshiped a cappella with no (instrumental) music in their worship service. So we wanted to honor that and make that a stipulation.”

The 36th and Garland Church of Christ, a 40-member, predominantly black congregation in Louisville, Ky., praised God upon learning about its share of the trust.

“This blessing has come ... at a time when our ceiling caved in due to a poorly constructed structure which allowed outside vermin to bite through the plastic tubing used for water,” senior minister Kenneth Ray said. “Because of God’s grace via R.W. Comer and sons, we will be able to rebuild and continue our children’s classes and training.”
INCLUDE The Christian Chronicle IN YOUR WILL OR ESTATE PLAN

The Heritage Circle includes those who bless the Chronicle through their will or estate plan.

Help secure the future of The Christian Chronicle.

Call Stephen Eck of the Chronicle Planned Giving Office for free assistance (405) 425-5080
Around the World

BOLIVIA
COCHABAMBA — Butch and Patricia Sandoval, who serve a Church of Christ in this South American city, spent weeks trapped in their neighborhood as demonstrators blockaded the streets.

Some marched in protest of Bolivia’s recent presidential election results. Others marched in favor of the country’s president, Evo Morales, who resigned in mid-November.

“The strike, blockades, marches and confrontations mean that many of our families are not working, and those that live day-by-day have had it hard,” Butch Sandoval told The Christian Chronicle. “We still meet on Sundays, although attendance is a bit low.”

He asked believers to “pray for humility among the leaders of the country and for understanding among the people.” Citing Psalm 33:7-11, he added, “The greatness of a people depends on their trust in God.”

Sandoval

BRAZIL
SÃO PAULO — More than 50 missionaries from across South America and the U.S. gathered for the annual Connections retreat, sponsored by Great Cities Missions.

The weeklong camp included prayer, meditation, fellowship and Bible study, said participant Larry Zinck, a missionary in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

“What a blessing for those who are always teaching others to be filled with strength from above,” he said.

MEXICO
TOLUCA — More than 100 Christians gathered in this suburb of Mexico City for a national praise and worship seminar. Some participants traveled 30 hours by bus to participate, said organizer Omar Corpus.

Spanish-speaking ministry leaders, including Josafat Mares, Isabel Rico, Lía Rubí, Hillel Romero, Ramiro Villa and Steve Austin gave classes on music theory, music resources, sight reading and vocal training. Participants learned new songs with assistance from a cappella group Te Alabamos (We Praise You).

Corpus is director of Ministerio Restauración, which offers resources to worship leaders and churches.

“The goal of this and future seminars,” Corpus said, “is to train not only worship leaders, but also church members in general to be able to learn, teach, and utilize a variety of praise and worship music in the local church.” For more information, email canticosdelreino@gmail.com.

New life, new churches in the Philippines

With the majestic Mayon Volcano as their backdrop, three young men give their lives to Christ. The baptisms are part of a church-planting effort in Albay, a province of about 1.7 million people on the southern tip of the island of Luzon in the Philippines. The province has a couple of house congregations but no Churches of Christ, said Jun Fuentes, director of Heritage Bible College, a school launched last year. The mission of the Albay team “is to revive the work in the province by starting a congregation in the Legazpi City area, which is the center of commerce and education in Albay,” Fuentes said. The team consists of three senior students from Heritage, which is a partner school of Sunset International Bible Institute. The school offers a bachelor's in theology and a master's in Christian ministry.

Isabel Rico teaches a class on “ear training” — learning to identify pitch, melody and rhythm by hearing.

New Zealand
DUNEDIN — This city on New Zealand’s South Island joined communities around the globe to recognize the 111th anniversary of Armistice Day, the agreement that ended the first World War.

“We come together today to remember those who served, those who’ve fallen, to remember families and loved ones as well as those who have lost so much so that we might gain,” said Aaron Knotts, minister for the Dunedin Church of Christ and a chaplain for the New Zealand Army. More than 100,000 troops and nurses from New Zealand served in the war from 1914 to 1918.

Knotts talked about the need for communities to support those who serve in the military now as they cope with issues including Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

‘A tinge of heaven,’ even without socks

SHIPDHAM, England — Dr. Khuen Foong Ng was having a very bad day.

The Malaysian-born pediatrician had been working 12-hour shifts just before he and his family left for the British Bible School retreat at Letton Hall. Their home internet stopped working, and Google maps “led us through small, narrow and dark paths” toward the retreat site, the church member said.

One of his children got car sick. Another had a cold.

“And I forgot to pack my socks,” he said.

Despite the hardships, “we were welcomed by smiles, greetings and friendliness from people whom we had never met before, people we call brothers and sisters in Christ,” he said. “All of the stress, burden and misery vanished instantly.”

The weekend brought “a tinge of heaven with spiritual family,” he added, “and we did not want to leave.”

Ng shares his account in The Christian Worker, a publication for Churches of Christ in the United Kingdom. Find a link to the story at christianchronicle.org.
When Keith Ball left for India in October, his family never imagined that they wouldn’t see him again. Ball, minister for the Delaware Church of Christ in Ohio, and a college friend, Steve McIntire, traveled to Bidar in south central India to work with a church. While there, Ball was bitten by a mosquito and infected with the Chikungunya virus. Less than a week after he was bitten, Ball died at a hospital in India.

The Chikungunya virus, according to the World Health Organization, typically causes high fever and joint pain but is rarely fatal. However, in this case, Ball was unable to recover.

“I’ve always heard of freak accidents of people dying suddenly and out of nowhere,” Ball’s son Joshua wrote in a Facebook post. “I never thought it would happen to my dad.”

Keith Ball had spent a lot of time in India. For years, he would take a trip every other year, spending about a month working in the country. Then, in recent years, he started going once a year, often traveling alone. He would go and work at preaching schools, helping train young ministers. He would also speak to churches in the area, sometimes preaching multiple times a day.

As he got older, Joshua Ball said, his dad considered reducing the number of trips but could never actually bring himself to follow through with that reduction.

“He just had to serve.”

He didn’t care about “self-promotion. It was about Jesus, not him,” Josh Ball said.

This year, he had decided not to travel alone, taking McIntire with him. His family believes that decision was inspired by God. McIntire was able to be with Keith Ball until the very end, making sure he had a chance to talk with his family by phone before he died.

It took several days and a lot of work, but thanks to the work of Steve McIntire and international authorities the Ball family was able to get Keith’s body transported back to the United States safely. Funeral services were conducted Nov. 8.
You sharing Jesus.

with Bibles for Millions and the tools of...
SCANDINAVIA: ‘Fresh troops’ still needed

A Church of Christ was launched in Gothenburg in June 1960 by Greer and J.D. Walker. In 1962, Bengt Aurell, a Swede who was converted in Stockholm, moved to Gothenburg to help with the work. Greer recruited Gerd and Lucky Fecht to work with the Gothenburg church before returning to the U.S. in 1969. The couple worked with the church and made regular trips to Stockholm to work with the few church members remaining there. The Fechts returned to the U.S. in 1975 but made regular trips to Sweden to work with churches.

 suggested the church’s first membership was about 30, but it had 200 to 300 members. Another was in a village, but it had 200 to 300 members.”

‘WE COULD HAVE DONE BETTER’

Churches of Christ in Sweden could have similar numbers to their Ghanaian counterparts, Williamson said, if they “spent the same amount of time and effort in Scandinavia as they’ve done in other parts of the world.”

In addition, “a very small, established congregation in Sweden could support missionaries into the rest of the world,” he said.

Too many American Christians think of Scandinavians as atheistic and unreachable — especially compared to people in Africa or Central America, Williamson said. Swedes have humanistic and postmodern beliefs, he said, but they’re also dedicated to family. They’re slow to make friends, but they make friends for life.

His parents, Floyd A. and Merna Williamson, were part of an initial wave of missionaries from Churches of Christ who worked in Scandinavia in the late 1950s and 1960s. They planted churches and, as they began returning to the U.S., they looked for new recruits to join the work.

One of the missionaries, Mitchell Greer, recruited Gerd Fecht of Oklahoma to join the work in Sweden. The German-born church member and his wife, Lucky, moved to Gothenburg, on Sweden’s west coast, in 1966. At the time, there were nearly 30 missionaries among the Scandinavian nations.

Fecht keeps a file of newspaper articles about the work in Sweden, including one that he had to miss games on Sundays.

“We visited three different churches,” he said. “At one, close to town, there were about 600 members. Another was in a village, but it had 200 to 300 members.”

“Here, it’s difficult to win souls,” said Inmanuel Opoku. “Maybe she’s up there, watching over me, seeing that I take the right steps.”

Gabrielle met her future husband, George, on a train. George Opoku, a traveling salesman who had worked previously in South Africa, struck up a conversation and asked for her phone number. She obliged, but when he called, a man answered and told him there was no Gabrielle in the house. (It was her father who answered, Gabrielle said, and to this day she’s not sure why he said that.)

A few months later, on a different train, George met Gabrielle again. He got her phone number again — only to realize he’d had it all along.

“It was destiny,” he said. “It was God’s will.”

They married in 1995. Now George works full time with a cleaning service. Gabrielle is an attendant in Sweden’s social care system, serving shut-ins and people with disabilities.

Their son, Immanuel, stands at 6 feet, 3 inches and is an avid soccer player. His friends don’t understand why he has to miss games on Sundays.

“He’s difficult to win souls,” said Inmanuel Opoku, who helps conduct worship services for the church. “The youths here, they’re not into God.”

He has traveled to his father’s homeland, Ghana, where he was amazed by what he saw.

“We visited three different churches,” he said. “At one, close to town, there were about 600 members. Another was in a village, but it had 200 to 300 members.”

Fecht keeps a file of newspaper articles about the work in Sweden, including one that he had to miss games on Sundays.

“We visited three different churches,” he said. “At one, close to town, there were about 600 members. Another was in a village, but it had 200 to 300 members.”
clippings and mission reports from their days on the field. In one report from Norway, missionary Kenneth P. Baird described Scandinavia as a “sleeping beauty,” full of breathtaking mountains and fjords but beset by “the beast of unbelief.”

In a 1967 issue of The Christian Chronicle, A. Wayne Harris in Denmark called for more workers. “A beachhead for further operations has been secured in each of the Scandinavian countries,” Harris wrote. “The job is not only far from finished, it is also likely to remain that way if there is not a step-up in recruiting and enlistment of fresh troops.”

Few “troops” answered that call, Fecht said. In Sweden, “by the time 1972 came around, we were the only ones left.”

“A lot of effort was put forth,” he said. “A lot of people sacrificed. I always feel like some good was done. We had great years. “We could have done better.”

BECOMING SWEDISH TO THE SWEDES

As the younger Williamsons prepared to work in Sweden, they hoped to follow in the footsteps of multi-family missions that planted churches in Sao Paulo, Brazil, and other cities around the world.

But potential teammates had to back out for financial or personal reasons, Floyd Williamson said, and the couple went to Sweden on their own in 1981. The Church of Christ they served grew to about 30 members before they returned to the U.S. in 1987. They went back to Sweden in 1990 but were only able to stay for two years, in part because of a steep decline in the U.S. dollar versus the Swedish currency. In the years since, the church has faded.

“If the Lord provided an open door for us, we would be willing to go back,” Floyd Williamson said, adding that he’d prefer to be part of a multi-generational team with a long-term vision.

“Becoming a Swede to the Swedes in order to win the Swedes” should be the goal, he said. “This includes learning the language, the culture, the traditions and accepting their history.”

‘WE’RE HERE TO SACRIFICE’

The Opokus would joyously welcome new workers from outside Sweden. But for Churches of Christ here to flourish, “I think the Swedish themselves are the key holders,” George Opoku said.

In the past, their small congregation has grown through immigrants from Ghana, but some have left to start separate worship services in their native language, Twi.

“I want a congregation that’s mixed with every people,” Gabrielle Opoku said. “I believe that God made church for everyone to be a part of. We’re not supposed to be divided into groups. I know that it happens, but it’s absolutely wrong to me.”

They’ve thought about moving to Ghana. Gabrielle said she loves it there and could adapt to life in West Africa, where they could be part of a large church family.

But “we’re here to sacrifice, to do this work for the Lord,” George Opoku said of Sweden, his adopted homeland. “We shouldn’t give up.”

The couple found a new reason to stay when they learned that Gabrielle was pregnant with their third child, a boy. Before press time, however, the couple informed the Chronicle that the child was stillborn. They named him Nathanael, “gift of God.”

The family soldiers on.

During their interview with the Chronicle, Gabrielle Opoku talked about her favorite Bible stories. She admires Moses, who kept serving God even when those around him doubted his ability to lead.

She takes encouragement from her favorite Bible stories. She admires Moses, who kept serving God even when those around him doubted his ability to lead.

She takes encouragement from her favorite Bible stories. She admires Moses, who kept serving God even when those around him doubted his ability to lead.

Javier’s work and his effort to establish The International Center for Christian Leadership is a critical project for the life and future of churches in Latin America. But Javier can’t do it alone and can’t do it without funding. He greatly needs people and churches who are willing to donate their talent, time and financial resources.

Immediate needs include:
- Support of Javier Leon’s family as team leader, trainer and producer of fresh resources
- Coverage of some traveling for team members for teaching
- Initial production and gathering of fresher resources
- Enrollment/Training of leaders, some travel
- Office equipment

Send Checks of support to:
Westview Church of Christ (for Javier Leon)
4151 W 20th Street, Greeley, CO 80634
the-iccl.org javilleon@yahoo.com

The best gift you can give your missionary is proper training.

Javier Leon

When the church produces strong visionary leaders, it influences society and impacts the community around it, as well as society and culture as a whole. The truth is that the absence of strong godly leaders in any generation affects the next generation. Weak leaders produce weaker leaders and unhealthy models for the next generation. Strong leaders produce committed followers who become strong leaders for the next generation. It is my desire to inspire, challenge, mentor and help anyway I can. I need your prayers and your help to develop leaders in Latin American churches to ensure generations are saved as Christ intended. – Javier Leon

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.

4.65% APY
5 Year Certificate
3.56% APY
3 Year Certificate
2.99% APY
1 Year Certificate

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 $500 for a term of 3 years. 2.99% APY is based on a minimum investment of $10,000 for a term of 1 year. The content and materials contained herein are not an offer to sell or a solicitation of an offer to buy Investment Certificates of The Solomon Foundations. 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 risk factors 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.

In

Funding Needs

Javier’s work and his effort to establish The International Center for Christian Leadership is a critical project for the life and future of churches in Latin America. But Javier can’t do it alone and can’t do it without funding. He greatly needs people and churches who are willing to donate their talent, time and financial resources.

Immediate needs include:
- Support of Javier Leon’s family as team leader, trainer and producer of fresh resources
- Coverage of some traveling for team members for teaching
- Initial production and gathering of fresher resources
- Enrollment/Training of leaders, some travel
- Office equipment

Send Checks of support to:
Westview Church of Christ (for Javier Leon)
4151 W 20th Street, Greeley, CO 80634
the-iccl.org javilleon@yahoo.com

The best gift you can give your missionary is proper training.

Javier Leon

When the church produces strong visionary leaders, it influences society and impacts the community around it, as well as society and culture as a whole. The truth is that the absence of strong godly leaders in any generation affects the next generation. Weak leaders produce weaker leaders and unhealthy models for the next generation. Strong leaders produce committed followers who become strong leaders for the next generation. It is my desire to inspire, challenge, mentor and help anyway I can. I need your prayers and your help to develop leaders in Latin American churches to ensure generations are saved as Christ intended. – Javier Leon

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.

4.65% APY
5 Year Certificate
3.56% APY
3 Year Certificate
2.99% APY
1 Year Certificate

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 $500 for a term of 3 years. 2.99% APY is based on a minimum investment of $10,000 for a term of 1 year. The content and materials contained herein are not an offer to sell or a solicitation of an offer to buy Investment Certificates of The Solomon Foundations. 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 risk factors 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.

In

Funding Needs

Javier’s work and his effort to establish The International Center for Christian Leadership is a critical project for the life and future of churches in Latin America. But Javier can’t do it alone and can’t do it without funding. He greatly needs people and churches who are willing to donate their talent, time and financial resources.

Immediate needs include:
- Support of Javier Leon’s family as team leader, trainer and producer of fresh resources
- Coverage of some traveling for team members for teaching
- Initial production and gathering of fresher resources
- Enrollment/Training of leaders, some travel
- Office equipment

Send Checks of support to:
Westview Church of Christ (for Javier Leon)
4151 W 20th Street, Greeley, CO 80634
the-iccl.org javilleon@yahoo.com

The best gift you can give your missionary is proper training.

Javier Leon

When the church produces strong visionary leaders, it influences society and impacts the community around it, as well as society and culture as a whole. The truth is that the absence of strong godly leaders in any generation affects the next generation. Weak leaders produce weaker leaders and unhealthy models for the next generation. Strong leaders produce committed followers who become strong leaders for the next generation. It is my desire to inspire, challenge, mentor and help anyway I can. I need your prayers and your help to develop leaders in Latin American churches to ensure generations are saved as Christ intended. – Javier Leon

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.

4.65% APY
5 Year Certificate
3.56% APY
3 Year Certificate
2.99% APY
1 Year Certificate

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 $500 for a term of 3 years. 2.99% APY is based on a minimum investment of $10,000 for a term of 1 year. The content and materials contained herein are not an offer to sell or a solicitation of an offer to buy Investment Certificates of The Solomon Foundations. 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 risk factors 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.
Sam Birmingham needs a kidney. (We only need one to live.)

It’s not often that we have an opportunity to deliberately step in and save someone’s life, but here is one of those occasions. If you have it in your heart, we ask you to carefully read this and pray over your decision to donate one of your kidneys. As time is short to help in this way, please use the contact information below to start the process. But first, here are a few things you should know about Sam …

Sam was raised in the Lord’s church by a father who was an elder and a true American hero in WWII. Sam Sr. served our nation in the Pacific and had the experience of spending days floating in the ocean, having three ships shot out from under him. Little Sam’s mother received three separate telegrams from the government informing her that she was a widow. Sam’s father lived, came home and became a leader in the church’s growth in eastern North Carolina until his death. Sam loves the Lord and the family of God; his hopes for life may depend upon you …

Today, Sam remains a pillar in the New Bern Church of Christ in New Bern, North Carolina (1340 South Glenburnie Road). He has remained active in door-knocking, home bible studies and the nursing home ministry next door to the building. He is faithful in his attendance, teaches a bible class, and has remained active in the distribution of disaster aid when his health allows him to do so. He loves fishing, is a devoted and loving husband, father and grandfather.

Sam and Jan have lived sacrificial lives and are truly good, godly Christian people who are in need of your help. The elders of the New Bern Church of Christ sincerely ask you to volunteer for this worthy effort. Contact information to help Sam is listed below.

1) All expenses for the donor are covered by insurance and Vidant Medical Center.
2) Sam is blood type A+ (though organ exchange is available for different types).
3) Sam is already fitted with a fistula. (He needs a donor as soon as possible.)
4) To get started or for more information call Linda Ipock (transplant coordinator).

Vidant Medical Center in Greenville, NC 27834
Mrs. Ipock: 252-744-2620, fax: 252-744-3452

---

Full-Time Biology Faculty
York College announces an opening for a full-time faculty member in the Biology Department. Preference will be given to candidates with a Ph.D. All applicants should demonstrate strong communication skills and interest in the academic and spiritual development of undergraduate students. A successful candidate will be an active member of the churches of Christ / Stone Campbell heritage and demonstrate a commitment to Christian education. York College is a private Christian institution of higher learning affiliated with the churches of Christ.

Applications will be accepted until the position is filled. Interested individuals should submit a letter of interest and curriculum vitae to Dr. Shane Mountjoy: provost@york.edu.

Learn more: york.edu/employment

---

Save the Date
Blue Ridge Family Encampment Reunion
June 4 - June 8, 2020

Scan Me

---

CONGREGATIONAL GROWTH
CONFIDENTIAL ANALYSIS AND
REPORTING

Includes a complete page report including recommendations for your congregation.

For information contact info@occg.institute
This service is done at no costing.

---

HELP PREPARE A REPORT ON
THE EFFECT OF ADOPTING
INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC
OBJECTIVE DATA NEEDED

Download a form at the website
OCG.INSTITUTE, bottom of the home page

---

A FREE, FULL ONLINE RESOURCE
FOR 21ST CENTURY EVANGELISM
www.occginstitute.org

---

For more information, contact:
info@occg.institute
See website for cell phone shortcut!
‘Adapt or die?’

GLOBAL MISSIONS CONFERENCE equips church members to reach a diverse and difficult culture – their own.

BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

Adapt to the culture you’re serving, but not in a way that compromises the truth of the Gospel.

For centuries, that was the challenge for missionaries who took God’s Word to faraway lands where people didn’t know Jesus.

In 2019, that same challenge remains for believers who seek to spread the Good News to foreign fields and to their own — Western culture — which seems increasingly opposed to biblical truths, said Bill Richardson.

“As Christians debate such topics as the sanctity of life or the definition of such basic concepts as gender, marriage and family, it becomes alarmingly clear that American churches are being tempted to synchronize the faith with secular culture and adopt a materialistic worldview,” said Richardson, a former missionary to Guatemala, Argentina and Chile.

Richardson, now a professor in the Center for World Missions at Harding University, spoke to nearly 600 Christians during the recent Global Missions Conference in Austin, Texas.

Participants came from Churches of Christ across the U.S. and from nearly a dozen countries. The audience also included students from universities associated with Churches of Christ, including from universities associated with nearly a dozen countries. The theme of the conference, organized by World Bible School and hosted by the Brentwood Oaks Church of Christ and Brentwood Christian School in Austin. Organizers offered nearly 100 classes following 19 curriculum tracks, including missions to the U.S., reaching youth, reaching Muslims, serving migrants and refugees, business as mission and missionary care.

OUTREACH THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

“Deep and Wide: Exploring Missions Dimensions” was the theme of the conference, organized by World Bible School and hosted by the Brentwood Oaks Church of Christ and Brentwood Christian School in Austin. Organizers offered nearly 100 classes following 19 curriculum tracks, including missions to the U.S., reaching youth, reaching Muslims, serving migrants and refugees, business as mission and missionary care.

Students listen to speakers at the 2019 Global Missions Conference in Austin.

For centuries, that was the challenge for missionaries who took God’s Word to faraway lands where people didn’t know Jesus.

Richardson spoke on the topic of “Adapt or Die?” — one of the conference’s Tension Talks focused on difficult questions facing modern missions. He noted the dangers of Christians over-adapting, becoming too much like a culture that rejects God’s sovereignty.

“In our culture, I believe that churches are racing to the mainstream … in an attempt to be attractive to believers, to be accepted and to be relevant,” he said. “In so doing, they have diluted the power of the Gospel, effectively marginalizing the church as the salt has lost its saltiness. In other words, there is a point at which we must be counter-cultural.”

He also warned against mission efforts that reject their host culture entirely, throwing out cherished traditions and beliefs that don’t contradict the Gospel. He noted the apostle Paul, who sought to be “all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some,” as he wrote in 1 Corinthians 9.

“Rather than opposing culture, the transcendent, super-culture God has chosen to draw near,” he said, “and culture is the vehicle through which he has chosen to reveal himself.”

Richardson

Richardson

Richardson

Students listen to speakers at the 2019 Global Missions Conference in Austin.

THE BIBLE IS GREEK TO THEM

Technological adaptation is vital if Churches of Christ, which are declining in number in the U.S., are to reach new generations with the Gospel, Reese said.

Steve Eckman echoed that sentiment as he spoke during the “Adapt or Die?” Tension Talk.

“College kids today, even at a Christian college, are a mission field,” said Eckman, president of York College in Nebraska. “Teaching them the Bible is like teaching them Greek.”

As they engage an increasingly hostile culture, Christians must resist the urge to condemn practices that don’t line up with biblical truths, he said. He cited Jesus’ conversation in John 4 with a Samaritan woman who had been married five times and was living with a man who was not her husband.

“Jesus doesn’t say, ‘Before we can talk, you’re going to have to clean up your life,’” Eckman said. “What if it’s today’s world and it’s a transgender person who is talking to us? Would we back off or would we dive into the Gospel?” He added, “God didn’t establish the church to protect us from the world. He established the church to reach the world.”

WEBSITE: www.gmc2019.org
Love in three languages: Christians join together to praise God

OHIO ASSEMBLY features worship in English, Spanish and Twi dialect of Ghana.

By Bobby Ross Jr., THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

COLUMBUS, Ohio

The hymns were familiar, even all the words were not.

At an areawide assembly hosted by the Northland Church of Christ, Ghanaian immigrants full of joy sang “The Name Is Ever” — “Our God, He Is Alive” — in their native dialect of Twi. Spanish speakers originally from Latin American nations such as Colombia, Guatemala and Mexico praised God with refrains such as “Y n Nyame” — “Our God, He Is Alive” — in their native language.

However, most of the Ghanaian children speak English, so the native-born and immigrant youngsters attend Sunday school together at 9:30 a.m.

On this recent Sunday night, about 200 members of Churches of Christ came together in Ohio’s capital city to sing, pray, commune and eat a fellowship meal.

The different languages reflected the multi-cultural nature of Northland — a 77-year-old church on the north side of this city of nearly 900,000 souls.

This has always been a very nice place to worship, said Sandy Stover, 50, who has worshiped with the congregation all her life. “I don’t remember a time when we didn’t have white and black members.”

NEW DYNAMICS

Stover remembers when ladies wore gloves, hats and fancy dresses to services. Farmland surrounded the building back then.

These days, Sunday service is much more casual and the setting much more urban. Low-income apartments flank the church on both sides. As crime became a bigger concern, many residents moved to more affluent areas, although some — like Stover — still drive to Northland for worship.

But while the community’s new dynamics challenged the church, the congregation eventually embraced the idea that “we’re here for a reason,” Stover said.

A COMMON FAITH

Now, the church has an active benevolence ministry and a food pantry that serves the poor, said Jeff McVicker, one of the three elders. In the summer, the congregation organizes a three-day-week camp featuring activities and meals for children.

“Those kids come in knowing three elders. In the summer, the congregation organizes a three-day-week camp featuring activities and meals for children.

Asamoah Boateng leads the Twi dialect version of “Our God, He Is Alive” during the areawide service at the Northland Church of Christ.

and food pantry that serves the poor, said Jeff McVicker, one of the three elders. In the summer, the congregation organizes a three-day-week camp featuring activities and meals for children.

An estimated 15,000 people live in Columbus. Jobs draw some to the Midwest city. Others come to the capital city to sing, pray, commune and eat a fellowship meal. However, most of the Ghanaian children speak English, so the native-born and immigrant youngsters attend Sunday school together at 9:30 a.m.

Those kids come in knowing the Bible as well as I do,” said Stover, who teaches second-grade children at Stover Christian School in Columbus. “I don’t remember a time when we didn’t have white and black members.”

Asamoah Boateng leads the Twi dialect version of “Our God, He Is Alive” during the areawide service at the Northland Church of Christ.

they worship in English, Spanish and Twi dialect of Ghana.

in Ephesians 2:19-20 (English Standard Version).”

The different languages reflected the multi-cultural nature of Northland — a 77-year-old church on the north side of this city of nearly 900,000 souls. However, most of the Ghanaian children speak English, so the native-born and immigrant youngsters attend Sunday school together at 9:30 a.m.

PEACE IN THE CHURCH

So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the corner stone.”

Dillinger read aloud, “Before offering a prayer for the Lord’s supper, Northland minister Caleb Dillinger opened his Bible to Paul’s letter to the Ephesians. ‘So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the corner stone.’”

“No then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the corner stone.”

“All this is a little bit of heaven right here,” Northland member Lynn Rosenbaum said before leading “We Saw Them Not” and “The Old Rugged Cross” in English.

This has always been a very nice place to worship, said Sandy Stover, 50, who has worshiped with the congregation all her life. “I don’t remember a time when we didn’t have white and black members.”

A worship program shows hymn selections in three languages.

Asamoah Boateng leads the Twi dialect version of “Our God, He Is Alive” during the areawide service at the Northland Church of Christ.

ALL PEREGRINOS TWI DIALECT SECRETARY, LADIES’ HOME SECRETARY, YOUTH SECRETARY AND CHURCH SECRETARY. AND ON THE LORD’S DAY — IN ALL, THAT’S ABOUT 250 SOULS WHO ATTEND THE CHURCH FOR THE SERVICE.

THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

Asamoah Boateng leads the Twi dialect version of “Our God, He Is Alive” during the areawide service at the Northland Church of Christ.

The Northland church grants full of joy and love to Ghanaian immigrant Christians wear traditional African attire as they worship during the areawide assembly at the Northland church.

Pino Teran, an El Salvador native who leads Northland’s Hispanic group, said of the joint assembly. “The culture is very apart, so this is a special event.”

Asamoah Boateng leads the Twi dialect version of “Our God, He Is Alive” during the areawide service at the Northland Church of Christ.
THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

DECEMBER 2019

Please apply by 12/31. Send résumé, cover letter, and references to: board@crafalcons.org

CEO/Administrator

Crowley’s Ridge Academy (CRA) is a private Christian school (preschool through 12th grade) in Paragould, AR, with a 65-year history. The school is seeking a full-time CEO/Administrator.

The CEO/Administrator is responsible for leading Crowley's Ridge Academy spiritually, academically, financially, and organizationally. The CEO/Administrator should reflect a Christ-like servant attitude with excellent communication and leadership skills. The CEO/Administrator is accountable for the operation of the school, focusing on communication with staff and key stakeholders, ensuring the fiscal responsibility of the school, and working closely with the Board of Directors to accomplish strategic goals. The CEO/Administrator works for and reports to the Board of Directors.

Minimum qualifications include a bachelor’s degree and 3 years of management experience leading a successful business or organization. Candidates must be active members of the church of Christ and committed to Christian Education.

Please apply by 12/31. Send résumé, cover letter, and references to: board@crafalcons.org

10 Ways to a Stronger Marriage

“Easy-to-read book with tons of great advice and practical marriage tips! This book offers something for every reader no matter what stage or condition your marriage is in.”

- Includes discussion questions for couples that can be used for individuals, small groups or for curriculum in Bible Class.
- Bless someone’s marriage this Christmas with this book.

Trey and Lea Morgan

Single orders at Amazon or to buy in bulk, contact us at: StrongerMarriageWorkshops.com

WILL YOU GIVE $1 A DAY TO SAVE A CHILD?

Zimbabwe is one of the earth’s most troubled countries. A vicious cyclone, killing drought and record inflation all threaten the lives of the nation’s most vulnerable... ITS CHILDREN

You can help save them, physically and spiritually.

To make a tax deductible donation or learn more about this program, please visit our website at www.epcofc.org/zop or mail to:

Zimbabwe Orphans Program
East Point Church of Christ
747 N 127th Street East
Wichita, KS 67206

Only $1 a day will help struggling Zimbabwean caregivers feed an orphaned child, clothe them and send them to school, to the doctor and church. We live in a God-blessed land of plenty. Will you share some of yours to save the children through the Zimbabwe Orphans Program (ZOP)?
Tell us about the “Music and Message” concert.

It was a performance of eight classical songs for the piano that also tell the stories of individuals that have overcome tragedy. This being the 250th anniversary of Beethoven’s birth, it seemed appropriate to perform two of the pieces he wrote while going deaf.

My interpretation of his “Moonlight Sonata” and “The Tempest” is that, in them, Beethoven reveals his personal suffering and aloneness. (He kept his condition hidden to his contemporaries.)

Each piece also makes a powerful statement of life, faith and hope.

How does your own story relate to this theme?

I’m pretty sure every person encounters a challenge to their faith sometime during their lifetime. Where is God in those moments that really matter most to us? If he’s all powerful, knows everything and has perfect love, why doesn’t he intervene when our reasoning says that any good person would if they could?

I had to give up piano and my dreams at age 16 because of a mysterious condition. It was a devastating reality for the gifted pianist, who hoped to study at Juilliard before he developed the dual-wrist and arm disability when he was a teenager.

He kept his faith in the Lord. After high school, Bauer attended Bear Valley Bible Institute in Denver with the idea of becoming a preacher. But later, he earned a business degree at Oklahoma Christian University in Oklahoma City and chose a career as a financial planner.

In 1998, Bauer experienced a renaissance through Splankna therapy, a Christian-based protocol for mind-body psychology. Now 60, he described himself as “a pianist and a preacher” during a recent “Music and Message” classical piano concert, during which he performed works by Beethoven, Chopin, Ravel, and Rachmaninoff. Partnering with Christian Relief Fund, Bauer raised more than $5,000 for water well drilling in western Africa.

Bauer, his wife, Beata, and their four children worship with the Littleton Church of Christ, south of Denver.

You infer at your concert that the course of your life was at different times one of despair and also a victory of sorts. How did you regain hope and trust again?

I think it is a paradox that when my physical state was at its worst, in so many ways I thrived. For six years after winning a state piano contest, I needed help with virtually everything because of a mysterious condition.

In my youth, I received training in both classical piano and preaching, and through my concert I share introductions that explain each piece (the “message”), and then I perform the music.

Since I was 16 — I just wanted it to remain a personal experience for those close friends and family attending. Now I’m pretty sure that I am supposed to share — through the life stories of others and my own, and through music — that there is a way back from doubt and disappointment with God.

Does anyone remember that Jesus’ interaction with his disciples resulted in their seeing a ghost? Mark’s gospel explains that when they were in greatest peril after hours of battling the waves and wind alone, Jesus intended to walk on by.

My reaction is, “What?” I’m pretty sure the disciples didn’t understand that maybe Jesus was trying to signal his confidence that they had almost overcome this obstacle.

And with both Mary and Martha, we see there was a crack, an opening for doubt revealed when they tell Jesus that their brother would not have died if he would have been there.

In both instances — and in Beethoven’s, and in mine — choices about God were made. Is God an apparition, a distortion of who we think he should be? Or is he one on whom we can depend — always good, always love?

I take encouragement that God reveals through Scripture the struggles of great women and men. He understands our struggles and doubting completely. And the music expresses the feelings of conflict or resolution that we experience.

You infer at your concert that the course of your life was at different times one of despair and also a victory of sorts. How did you regain hope and trust again?

I think it is a paradox that when my physical state was at its worst, in so many ways I thrived.
**Summer Camp Paid Staff - Michigan Christian Youth Camp**

Want to make a difference in the lives of kids while earning money in the summer of 2020?

Michigan Christian Youth Camp serves hundreds of children ages 8 – 17 years old in Detroit and the surrounding areas of Michigan every summer. Come be part of our team! Michigan Christian Youth Camp is looking for energetic Jesus followers who enjoy being outdoors, being with children and serving God. Every year 25-30 staff are recruited and assembled from all around the nation to make up our summer staff. Positions include Counselors, Lifeguards, Wranglers, Outdoor Crew, Staff Life Directors, Craft Director, and Waterfront Director. For more information contact us at Programs@mcyc.org, or if you would like to fill out an application, go to mcyc.campbrainstaff.com.

**YOUTH/FAMILY MINISTER - Xenia, Ohio**

The Church of Christ is looking for a youth minister for a congregation of 225. Our current Youth Minister is retiring in December 2019. A successful candidate will have experience and/or training in youth ministry, exceptional interpersonal skills, and the ability to work with teens, parents, and other staff. He should desire to work with and mentor the youth of Xenia and surrounding area. Send your resume to: office@xeniachurch.org

Learn more about us at: xeniachurch.org

**Children and Family Minister**

Woodland West Church of Christ in Arlington, Texas, is looking for someone to help us take a thriving Children and Family Ministry to the next level, helping children and their families to know and grow deeper in their relationship with Jesus and to go serve Christ in our community. For the job description and qualifications, contact us at:

jobs@wwcoc.org

**Bible-based Minister Needed - Burbank, California**

Seeking a sound and mature minister to work with our current minister and 50-member congregation. Transition to full-time pulpit minister as our current minister retires. Must be solid in Scriptures, passionate for evangelism, a capable preacher and Bible class teacher. Opportunity to help a close-knit and loving congregation grow. Self-motivated person with heart of a servant who demonstrates love for people. Own building/classroom facilities in major metro/mission area. Flexible on salary and benefits; parishage available. Willingness to do secular part-time work encouraged. To apply, email resume, and audio/visual recordings of two sermons to:

Burbank Church of Christ
Attn: Nathan Scott, 3020 W Burbank Blvd, Burbank, CA 91505
Or by email: burbankchurchofchrist@gmail.com

**FULL-TIME PULPIT MINISTER**

Glenpool Church of Christ, approx. 200 members, is looking for a full-time minister. We are located in one of the fastest growing communities in Oklahoma. We are seeking a mature family man with excellent preaching and teaching skills and a passion for ministry and the Word. Inquiries and resumes should be sent to: glenpoolministerssearch@gmail.com

Learn more at: glenpoolchurchofchrist.com/ ministry-search

**BAUER: Physical issue brought challenges to his spiritual life**

FROM PAGE 23

condition called focal dystonia. I learned to depend on others — and on God.

And then I discovered a treatment that brought about slow recovery with my arms and hands.

But as I regained some independence again, thoughts and anxiety formulated. Maybe God took it away from me once, and so he might again. With that opening, my heart darkened toward God.

My full faith was restored many years later when I prepared and preached a sermon as a fill-in at my church titled “Jesus Wept.” Mary and Martha’s doubts in the face of clear “evidence” that Jesus didn’t care, as proved by his absence in their time of need, was dispelled when Jesus cried.

The narrative starts with, “Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus,” and ends in proof that Jesus cared when he was deeply moved, and he wept.

My story — and yours, everyone’s — begins with “Now Jesus loved Gordon, or Lynda, or ...” and ends always in his being deeply moved because of our personal suffering.

I believe Jesus cries for all of us in that exact moment we are hurting the most. The realization that Jesus cares changed everything for me.

What is ahead for you?

I want to share spiritual messages and classical music that complement each other. So my website has a section that introduces great classical music, like a primer or a music appreciation class. There’s also a “Music and Message” section.

And I am now offering to perform for charities free of charge. Maybe there are other nonprofit groups that could utilize the piano concert format for fundraising.

It is a joy unsurpassed to play piano in front of an audience and do good for a great cause.

SEE VIDEOS from Bauer’s concert and learn more about his music ministry at his website, musicandmessage.net.
LUBBOCK CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY
LUBBOCK, Texas — A million-dollar gift from the James A. “Buddy” Davidson Charitable Foundation of Midland, Texas, will endow an academic chair in Lubbock Christian University’s Bible college. The gift will establish the James A. “Buddy” Davidson Charitable Foundation Chair in Youth and Family Ministry. The funds will support a faculty position, provide resources for faculty development and research, and offer scholarships for students.

Jeff Cary, the Bible college’s dean, announced at a recent news conference that David Fraze, associate professor of youth and family ministry, will receive the first appointment to the endowed chair.

PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY
MALIBU, Calif. — Business innovator, civic leader and philanthropist Rick J. Caruso and his wife, Tina, have made a $50 million commitment to the Pepperdine School of Law, which will be named the Rick J. Caruso School of Law in recognition of the gift.

The contribution, made through the Caruso Family Foundation, will expand educational access to underserved student populations as well as fuel several initiatives to strengthen the law school’s academic programming, Pepperdine officials said.

Rick Caruso is a Pepperdine law alumnus, earning his Juris Doctor degree in 1983.

MAGNOLIA MESSENGER
KOSCIUSKO, Miss. — Al Franks, publisher and editor of the Magnolia Messenger Christian newspaper for 40 years, died Oct. 16 after falling and hitting his head. He was 80.

“Al was a preacher, a publisher and a pilot,” said his obituary, published before his memorial service at the Huntingdon Street Church of Christ. Franks gave his first Bible talk when he was 9 years old and preached the Gospel for 70-plus years.
Praying for ‘rabbit churches’

RENEW GATHERING urges church leaders to focus on disciple-making that multiplies.

BY ERICK TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

FRANKLIN, Tenn.

On his knees, Shodankeh Johnson asked the Lord to help churches move from “expensive to cheap” and from centralized to decentralized.

The evangelist from Sierra Leone also asked for a renewed spirit of evangelism to sweep through believers on his home continent of Africa and in the U.S.

Instead of relying on religious authorities, he urged churches to become movements of common people, under the lordship of Christ, committed to discipling — helping people trust and follow Jesus.

Although Johnson works with a network of congregations that use instruments in worship, “we don’t need instruments to start the church,” he told 550 church leaders during the annual Renew Gathering in Middle Tennessee. “We only need the Bible and the Holy Spirit.”

Johnson was one of 11 speakers during the gathering, which featured 14 workshops and was sponsored by Renew, a collaborative network of ministry leaders dedicated to “equipping millions of disciples, disciple makers and church planters among all ethnicities,” according to the network’s website, Renew.org.

The gathering has doubled in size since last year, said Bobby Harrington, the network’s founder. He estimated that 45 percent of the participants came from Churches of Christ, 30 percent came from Christian Churches, and the rest represented various evangelical churches and the International Churches of Christ.

Harpeth Christian Church hosted the event, and the Heritage Church of Christ, which meets less than a mile away, provided overflow parking and a shuttle for participants.

“If the church is going to reverse its decline in the West, we must return to our fundamental task of making disciples for Jesus,” said Rusty Tugman, who traveled from Norman, Okla., where he serves as senior minister for the Alameda Church of Christ, to attend the gathering. The event “was a great opportunity to connect with other disciple-makers and to be equipped for the task of helping the church return to its Christ-given Great Commission.”

Making disciples requires simplicity, said another Renew participant, Scott Sager, vice president for church services at Lipscomb University in nearby Nashville, Tenn. He agreed with Johnson’s “less is more” approach.

“The best way to reverse downward growth trends in our churches is not by becoming slicker, but by becoming more faithful to Jesus’ mission,” Sager said. “Renew was a breath of fresh air to Churches of Christ, bringing a commitment to disciple-making and a conviction about obedience-based living that resonated with those in attendance.”

Johnson, the son of a Methodist father and a Muslim mother, works with New Harvest Global Ministries in Sierra Leone. He and his team have planted thousands of churches in West Africa.

In the U.S. and in Africa, Johnson said, some congregations have become “elephant churches,” very large, but slow to reproduce. He prayed for “rabbit churches” that multiply quickly through evangelism and discipleship.

To that end, the North Boulevard Church of Christ in the Nashville suburb of Murfreesboro, Tenn., has set the ambitious, rabbit-like goal of planting 100,000 new congregations in the next 30 years. David Young, North Boulevard’s senior minister, spoke during the Renew Gathering about what God is doing through disciple-making movements.

Young and Harrington have acknowledged the pain that many in Churches of Christ feel when they hear the word “discipling” due to the controversial practices of the International Churches of Christ, including its top-down hierarchy and aggressive techniques. Leaders of the movement’s churches have acknowledged past sins while voicing a renewed commitment to reaching lost souls.

Harrington believes that Bible-based discipling, following the example of Jesus as he trained his own disciples, is a key component of church growth. Harrington said he’s come to this conclusion as he’s trained hundreds of church planters.

“Discipleship,” he said, “is the core mission of the local church.”
You can make a real difference in the world – an eternal one. That’s what talented, mission-minded faculty and staff do each day at ACU, one of “America’s Best Colleges” and a leader for 113 years in Christian higher education.

You can make a real difference in the world – an eternal one. That’s what talented, mission-minded faculty and staff do each day at ACU, one of “America’s Best Colleges” and a leader for 113 years in Christian higher education.

You can make a real difference in the world – an eternal one. That’s what talented, mission-minded faculty and staff do each day at ACU, one of “America’s Best Colleges” and a leader for 113 years in Christian higher education.

You can make a real difference in the world – an eternal one. That’s what talented, mission-minded faculty and staff do each day at ACU, one of “America’s Best Colleges” and a leader for 113 years in Christian higher education.
FACULTY POSITIONS AVAILABLE

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

Initial application should include a letter of interest and curriculum vitae. To complete the application, three church references, three professional references, and a transcript of the highest degree are required.

Salary and rank are determined based on credentials and experience.

COLLEGE OF ALLIED HEALTH • ATHLETIC TRAINING (TWO POSITIONS). Seeking a full-time, 12-month faculty member to serve as the clinical education coordinator within a CAATE-accredited athletic training program. Candidates holding a doctoral degree (or willingness to immediately pursue a doctoral degree) are preferred. Minimum qualifications include a master's degree, athletic training certification, and two years clinical experience. At least two years teaching experience within a CAATE-accredited athletic training program is also preferred. Responsibilities will include didactic instruction, as well as coordination and assessment of clinical education.

Also seeking a full-time, nine-month faculty member. Candidates holding a doctoral degree (or willingness to immediately pursue a doctoral degree) are preferred. Minimum qualifications include a master's degree, athletic training certification, and two years clinical experience. At least two years teaching experience within a CAATE-accredited athletic training program is also preferred. This is a non-clinical position. Responsibilities will include didactic instruction within a CAATE-accredited athletic training program.

Submit application materials to Brian Cox, director, Athletic Training, at bcox@harding.edu or HU Box 12281, Searcy, AR 72149.

PAUL R. CARTER COLLEGE OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION • INFORMATION SYSTEMS. Seeking a full-time faculty member to teach undergraduate and graduate courses in business data analytics. Minimum qualifications include a master's degree in information systems or equivalent and either 18 hours of relevant doctoral study or eight years of industry experience in the data analytics field. A doctorate in information systems with a concentration in data science or data analytics is preferred. The candidate should have an understanding of the statistical and data quality concepts underpinning analytics; a working knowledge of the major analytics tools/platforms, reporting and visualization software; proficiency in a scripting language such as Python, R, SAS; and experience with SQL. The Paul R. Carter College of Business Administration is committed to the promotion of free markets and economic freedom.

Submit application materials to Dr. Allen Frazier, dean, Paul R. Carter College of Business Administration, at afrrazier@harding.edu or HU Box 10774, Searcy, AR 72149.

These additional openings are available at harding.edu/facultyjobs:

- COLLEGE OF ALLIED HEALTH • COMMUNICATION SCIENCES & DISORDERS
- PAUL R. CARTER COLLEGE OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION • MARKETING

Please visit harding.edu/hr for further information on these positions and to learn more about open staff positions.

Harding University is an Equal Opportunity Employer and does not unlawfully discriminate in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, national or ethnic origin, age, sex, disability or prior military service.
**NEWMAKERS**

**David and Barbara Duncan accept the Distinguished Alumni Award from Oklahoma Christian University in Oklahoma City.**

**HONORED:** David Duncan, minister for the Memorial Church of Christ in Houston, and his wife, Barbara Duncan, with the Distinguished Alumni Award from Oklahoma Christian University. Ryan Groves, social entrepreneur who attends the University Church of Christ in Malibu, Calif., as Young Alumnus of the Year by Oklahoma Christian. Dennis and Susan Cady, members of the Burk Burnett Church of Christ in Texas and longtime missions supporters all over the world, with the Missions Service Award from Oklahoma Christian.

---

**Milestones**

**Birthdays**

89th: Chal Burgess, Houston, Dec. 19. Happy Birthday, Chal!

**Memorials**

**J.B. Cox**

1926 – 2019

J.B. Cox, age 93, of Columbus, Texas, passed away on Sept. 23, 2019. He was born on July 16, 1926, to Jim and Golda (Prather) Cox in Ben Hur, Texas. J.B. was an active, lifelong Church of Christ member and song leader. He enjoyed 70 years as a petroleum geologist and served as a lieutenant in the United States Navy.

He was preceded in death by his parents and a grandson. J.B. is survived by his wife of 71 years, Evelyn Cox; daughters Evette (Gary) Orren, Trina (Jim) Major; a sister, niece and nephew; four grandchildren and their spouses; and five great-grandchildren.

J.B. is lovingly remembered by family and friends. His message to everyone: “There is no right way to do a wrong thing.”

Memorials may be given to:

**Insight for Life**
PO Box 730
Carencro, LA 70520

**In Search of the Lord’s Way**
PO Box 371
Edmond, OK 73083-9901

**The Christian Chronicle**
PO Box 11000
Oklahoma City, OK 73136-1100

---

**Darvin Wendall Keck**

1926 – 2019

Darvin Wendall Keck, longtime professor of biology at Oklahoma Christian University, passed away on Oct. 3, 2019. Darvin was born Feb. 28, 1926, in Willis, Oklahoma, to Jewell (Purdue) and George W. Keck.

After being discharged from the service, he alternated teaching in public schools and attending college for several years. In 1951, while teaching in Dierks, Arkansas, he saw a beautiful freckle-faced young lady at church - Vickie Ann Champion. Twelve weeks later on June 9, 1951, they were married, and off they moved to Stillwater, Okla., so he could finish his schooling. He earned his B.S., M.S., and Ph.D. from Oklahoma State University.

Starting in 1956, he taught at Oklahoma Christian University for 32 years. There he became known as the professor with the pencil behind his ear and a quick-witted personality. He served many years as the chairman of the Division of Science and was the first inductee into the Division of Science and Engineering Hall of Honor. During his work there, he was honored as Professor Emeritus and Master Teacher. He served the Church of Christ as a preacher, teacher, song leader, deacon, and elder.

Darvin was preceded in death by his bride of 46 years, Vickie Ann; his parents; two brothers, Marion and Benny; and his sister, Georgia. He is survived by son, David (Terri) Keck of Edmond Okla.; his daughter Vickie Lee (Randy) Gillman of Frisco, Texas; and daughter, Sherri Keck of Manhattan, Kan.; six grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

---

**William “Bill” Simpson**

1932 – 2019

William R. “Bill” Simpson of Paducah, Ky., passed away March 18, 2019, on his 87th birthday. He is survived by his wife of 65 years, Marilyn Simpson; daughter, Suzanne (Brent) Roberts and son, Rick (Jackie) Simpson; three grandchildren and one great-granddaughter.

Bill graduated from Purdue University with a Bachelor of Science in pharmacy and served two years in the United States Army Medical Service Corps. When he returned to Paducah, he served the community of Lone Oak as a pharmacist and owner of Lone Oak Pharmacy for 31 years. He was active in the Broadway Church of Christ in Paducah as a deacon, elder, and Bible class teacher.

Bill was a giant of the faith and a friend of Oklahoma Christian University. He was named to the Board of Trustees in 1991. His service was marked by consistency, loyalty, and generosity. With little public acknowledgement, Bill gave his time, money, and spirit to OC. “Literally for decades, Bill had an encouraging and kind approach that resulted in love and respect,” stated John deSteiguer, university president. “Fellow trustees and University employees alike told me that Bill was their favorite – because he cared for them and for each person he was with. Bill and his sweet Marilyn were a special couple – always encouraging, always supportive, always interested, and always kind. He will be missed.”

---

With Appreciation

The Christian Chronicle appreciates and acknowledges generous gifts received in honor of Lynn McMillon and in memory of J.B. Means, Betty Pogue, Barbara Ann Thornton, Zula Turney and Emmett Wade.

Submit tributes to milestones@christianchronicle.org. Submissions start at $25.
Missionary, WBS president
Tex Williams dies at 91

Robert Harold Williams, known among Churches of Christ worldwide as “Tex,” died Oct. 23. He was 91.

For nearly two decades, Williams served as president of World Bible School, a ministry that teaches the Bible through correspondence courses delivered by postal mail and online. The 46-year-old ministry, which is supported and overseen by members of Churches of Christ, has played a role in thousands of baptisms worldwide — especially on the continent of Africa.

“He was a faithful and hard worker in the kingdom,” Behailu Abebe, a longtime minister for Churches of Christ in Ethiopia, said of Williams. “Thousands have come to see the light of Jesus because of his direct efforts, preaching and teaching the good news to the lost.”

Williams grew up in Lacey Lakeview, a small community near Waco, Texas. At an early age — 7 or 8 years old — he was told by a Sunday school teacher that he was destined to become a missionary.

His response: “No, I’m going to be a cowboy,” he told The Christian Chronicle in a 2011 interview.

He stuck largely to that plan, earning a scholarship from Texas A&M University to study animal husbandry. He intended to become a rancher. But within a year, Williams changed his mind and fulfilled his Sunday school teacher’s prediction.

He transferred to Abilene Christian College (now University) to study Bible. There he served as student body president and preached for small Churches of Christ on Sundays. He also played football.

After graduating in 1952, Williams worked for the Boles Home, a children’s home near Quinlan, Texas, associated with Churches of Christ. (The home is now part of the Arms of Hope ministry.) He served as a counselor and activities director. He also directed the Bel Canto Chorus.

He met Mary Jane Williamson, who grew up at the Boles Home, and married her in 1955. They moved to Austin, where Williams preached for the Northside Church of Christ (now Hyde Park Church of Christ).

In 1957, the couple and their son, Rocky, took a freighter from New Orleans, along with the C.W. “Abe” Lincoln family, to South Africa to serve as missionaries. The missionaries established and strengthened Churches of Christ in Port Elizabeth, Pietermaritzburg, Durbin and Benoni. Williams helped establish Bible schools to train preachers.

The family returned to Texas in 1970, and Williams joined the faculty of the Sunset School of Preaching (now Sunset International Bible Institute) in Lubbock. He taught Bible courses and trained preachers and missionaries.

In 1985, Reuel Lemmons recruited Williams to serve as his assistant in the World Bible School ministry in Austin. Two years later, Williams became World Bible School’s president. He traveled nationally and internationally, promoting the ministry and global missions. In 1998, Abilene Christian University presented him with an honorary doctorate for lifetime achievement in missions.

During his tenure, Williams recruited another missionary to Africa, John Reese, to join the ministry in 1991. In 2006, Reese succeeded Williams as president.

Williams had been homebound in recent years. He is survived by his wife, their five children, 11 grandchildren and 14 great-grandchildren.

Grace Nyanga, a Ugandan Christian, wrote an online tribute to Williams, “Your mantle was carefully handled and skillfully passed on, Tex,” Nyanga said. “Many of us are products of your efforts and chanced to listen to your wise counsel. We will miss you and hope to pass on your mantle.”

“You deserve heaven, brother!”

MEMORIAL GIFTS may be made to World Bible school at www.worldbibleschool.net/donate/.
DECEMBER 2019

**CALENDAR**

Nov. 23-28  Southwestern Christian College Lectureship. Terrell, Texas. Contact Dr. Barclay at (972) 524-3341, swclectureship1949@gmail.com. See swcc.edu.

Dec. 2  GivingTuesday. Donate online: christianchronicle.org/donate.


Jan 22-23  SERVE Ministries Workshop. Athens Church of Christ, Athens, Tenn. Contact (423) 920-3060, involvementcoach@att.net. See churchinvolvement.com.


Feb. 2-6  Freed-Hardeman Bible Lectureship. Henderson, Tenn. Contact Kristi Burleson at (731) 608-6457, lectureship@fhu.edu. See fhu.edu.


June 4-8  Blue Ridge Family Encampment Reunion.

**FULL CALENDAR:** www.christianchronicle.org.

To include your event for $25, contact tonya.patton@christianchronicle.org.

---

**YOUTH and FAMILY MINISTER**

South Main Church of Christ in Weatherford, Texas, is a vibrant and growing church family. We are seeking a full-time Youth & Family Minister to join us in equipping teens, families, and the church body to have deeper relationships with God and each other.

Submit resumes to:

churchofchristsouthmain@gmail.com

---

**House Parents**

Join the exciting Childhaven ministry team! If you are seeking an avenue for making an eternal difference in the lives of others – consider the ministry of house parenting!

House Parents Are Needed! Seeking a couple of great faith and love for teens to serve Childhaven. Childhaven provides excellent salary and benefits and hires both husband and wife full time. Become a part of an outstanding and supportive team! For more information, contact Director of Social Service, Vicki Rhodes, by phone or email. To learn more, visit www.childhaven.com!

Childhaven, Inc.
PO Box 2070, Cullman, AL 35056
(256) 734-6720, vrhodes@childhaven.com

---

**Youth Minister - Hempstead, Texas**

The Hempstead Church of Christ is searching for a full-time youth minister to work with us in the development of Christian character in the lives of our teens. We are a congregation with a current Sunday morning attendance of about 80. We are located northwest of Houston, Texas, in an area that is transitioning from a rural Texas environment into an expanding suburban culture. We expect to see our congregation experience significant growth over the next few years – potentially doubling or tripling in size. We are looking for a youth minister to partner with us in this unique outreach and growth opportunity. If interested, contact Ed Hance at ed.hance@outlook.com for more detailed information regarding our vision and expectations for a youth ministry.

Hempstead Church of Christ
23100 FM 359 Road, Hempstead, TX 77445

---

**Nigeria Support Help**

If you are supporting a great work in Nigeria and you are having trouble getting money into the country, Chad can help. Call or email:

(731) 206-0056
nigeriaevangelism@gmail.com

---

**Full-Time Minister - Cortez, Colorado**

The Church of Christ in Cortez, Colo., is accepting resumes for a full-time minister. If interested, send your resume, references and a link to recent sermons to:

cortezcofc@live.com

Church of Christ
Attn: Minister Search
PO Box 145, Cortez, CO 81321

Cortez Church of Christ is a place where Christ is believed, taught and lived. Come check us out!

---

**Preacher Search - Warwick, Rhode Island**

We are a small congregation that desires to grow both spiritually and numerically. Currently, our resources are limited, and while we can offer some salary, we also can offer a modest four-bedroom home. For full description, please visit our website:

warwickrichurchofchrist.org

If interested, send your resume and cover letter, including a brief description of the strengths you would bring to our congregation to:

warwickrichoc@gmail.com

Warwick Church of Christ
PO Box 7095, Warwick, RI 02887-7095

---

**#GIVINGTUESDAY**

Join the worldwide #GivingTuesday movement on December 2, 2019.

Donate online: christianchronicle.org/donate

Visit our online listings at christianchronicle.org/classifieds.

Deadline for next two issues:
December 6 and January 10
Contact: tonya.patton@christianchronicle.org
Thankful for an imperfect holiday

FRIENDS AND SURPRISE GUESTS make for wonderful memories. And don’t forget the chili cheese grits.

I love Thanksgiving.

The first 10 years of my life were spent in a small farming community in northeastern Colorado where my parents moved just four months after my birth — part of a migration from the Texas oil patch.

Relatives were several states away. I had no siblings. But we spent Thanksgiving each year with church friends whose holiday spread might include a German dish or two, where families named Neill and Kembell, Wenger and Weiderspan brought lots of relatives who didn’t seem to mind three more.

The white stucco building where the Fort Morgan Church of Christ gathered had 80 or so folks most Sundays. Classrooms were in the basement. My teachers included Lois and Eunice, and I thought that was such a cool coincidence. I was baptized there on a cold Wednesday night one November.

My dad called ahead so they would fill the baptistry, and the water was still running when we arrived. He led the invitation song.

I loved those people and those Thanksgivings.

The oil patch took us to Littleton, Colo., then to Midland, Texas, where I spent my senior year of high school longing for the Rockies, then on to Houston. With each move we found churches and families who would take us in for the holidays or other small families who arrived at our front door with a covered dish to add to the table. And one year my mother made chili cheese grits. At Thanksgiving.

I loved those people and those Thanksgivings.

For the last 15 years or so, Thanksgiving is most often at my table. My parents grew older and more frail. For a few years, they joined the parade of international students from my classes and college friends of my children for the starch fest that is Thanksgiving at my house — where sweet potatoes with marshmallows on one end and pecans on the other are dished up next to cornbread stuffing and chili cheese grits.

I should have kept a list of the states and nations represented, how many times we tried to explain the chili cheese grits, how many times I’ve told about my former students who returned home to Singapore after graduation and reinvented Thanksgiving with duck instead of turkey, and the times we recorded a Dallas Cowboys game.

A few years ago, we moved the event to the weekend before Thanksgiving, which allowed my son and daughter to celebrate with their significant others while I hopped from feast to feast, celebrating with families who invited me to come and bring a covered dish.

My daughter dubbed the new gathering Friendsgiving — but in my heart it will always be Thanksgiving. Friends, new in-laws and always a surprise guest or two crowd around a table built to seat eight, or 10, but in a pinch it can handle 12, or maybe more if we put two at each end.

Everyone always wants to be at one table.

I love that.

Don’t imagine these Thanksgivings have been the stuff of Norman Rockwell. Don’t imagine they’re so different from your own. Sandwiched between them have come illness, divorce and dementia.

The unexpected changes wrought by age and family dysfunction have not always been easy.

At least twice, I forgot about the sweet potatoes in the oven and set the marshmallows on fire, adding to the stories that get told every year.

But I love these people and these Thanksgivings.

I love gathering to join hands and saying, “Welcome to my home.” I love seeing grace. I love embarrassing stories and awkward moments and laughing to the point of tears.

I love cold pumpkin pie for breakfast the next day. I love finding one overlooked glass beside the couch.

I love a holiday that reminds us to give thanks — to be grateful not just that day but every day to the One who perfects us in our imperfection.

And I love chili cheese grits.

CHERYL MANN BACON served for 20 years as chair of the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication at Abilene Christian University. In retirement, she is enjoying freelance writing and consulting, especially with churches. Contact her at bacon@acu.edu.
**ACROSS**

1. His wife turned back and became a pillar of salt.  
3. Religious rulers who were angry at Jesus for healing.  
9. Mary was one when Jesus was born.  
10. Jesus instructed the disciples to be ____ of men.  
11. Religious precepts revealed to Moses on Mount Sinai (two words).  
14. Prefix before ordination and operation.  
15. Practice.  
16. In Revelation the Lord says, “I am the __ and the Omega.”  
21. In Exodus, Pharaoh orders his taskmasters not to give the people ___ for bricks.  
22. Immorality.  
23. End of a prayer.  
25. Part of a stable.  
26. The Lord.  
27. Abel’s father.  
29. Son of Noah.  
30. Matthew 6: “No one can serve ___ masters.”  
32. “Give us this day ____ daily bread.”  
33. Beasts in the Bible.  
35. Polite word of address.  
36. Detroit’s state.  
37. Proverbs 28: “The wicked flee when no one pursues but the righteous are bold as a ____.”  
40. Request earnestly to God.

**DOWN**

2. In 2 Samuel God promises one for David.  
3. Job complains about his fate,  
4. “For the arrows of the Almighty are within me, Their ___ my spirit drinks” (Job 6).  
5. Figure in a nativity play.  
7. Proverbs 31: “___ is clothed with strength and dignity and laughs without fear of the future.”  
8. Solomon was said to be the ____ of rulers.  
12. Isaiah the prophet said he would “send his ___ ahead of you, to prepare the way.”.  
13. Book describing the rebuilding of Jerusalem during the Second Temple period  
17. One who made heaven and earth  
18. “Like a sparrow in its flitting, like a ___ in its flying, so a curse does not alight” (Proverbs 26).  
19. “Ask and it will be given to you: seek and you will ___.”  
20. ___ God in three persons.  
25. Isaiah 40: “He ____ enthroned above the circle of the earth.”.  
28. Food from heaven.  
31. Victory.

**BIBLE BOWLING**

**Lads to Leaders** questions from Luke 2:  
1. The census decreed by Caesar was the first to take place while who was governor of Syria?  
2. Why did Joseph go to Bethlehem for the census?  
3. Who appeared to the shepherds along with the angel who proclaimed the census?  
4. The angel describes Jesus in four ways. What are they?  
5. Jesus was given his name one which day after his birth?  
6. When Jesus was taken to the temple to be presented to the Lord, what sacrifice was required?  

**Leadership Training for Christ** questions from 2 Samuel 2:  
1. When David asked, “Shall I go up to one of the towns of Judah?” where does the Lord tell him to go?  
2. Who did David take with him to that place?  
3. The men who buried Saul were from where?  
4. Who was the commander of Saul’s army?  
5. This commander named ____ king over Israel.  
6. How long did he reign?  
7. How long was David king over Judah?  

**FIND ANSWERS** and more information about the Lads to Leaders and Leadership Training for Christ 2020 conventions at christianchronicle.org. To sponsor this page, contact advertising manager Tonya Patton at tonya.patton@christianchronicle.org.
Reflecting on a viral act of forgiveness

BLACK MINISTER WHO KNEW Botham Jean ponders justice, mercy and an imperfect system.

Many well-intended people shared their opinions of the viral hug of forgiveness between Brandt Jean and Amber Guyger (Page 1, November).

Guyger is the fired police officer convicted of murdering 18-year-old Brandt’s older brother Botham Jean, 26, who was sitting in his Dallas living room eating ice cream when Guyger entered, believing it to be her apartment, and shot him.

My response to Brandt’s hug and forgiveness was filtered through my personally knowing Botham. What I knew of Botham Jean led me to believe that this is exactly what he would have wanted Brandt Jean to do.

Apart from that filter, both as a Christian and a black man, I saw Brandt’s actions as heroic. From the Christian perspective, I believe he exhibited Christ-like forgiveness, which is a feat worthy of praise and emulation.

From the black perspective, I believe Brandt exhibited the power of our race. Black people through the centuries in America have often chosen to be forgiving. We have grown up in a country built upon our backs yet inaccessible to us. Through the centuries we have not stereotypically walked the high ground of success nor the high ground of respect nor the high ground of power. But we have reclaimed our sense of success, respect and power by walking the high ground of morality.

Throughout history, when we could not find high ground anywhere else, we have taken back our dignity and self-esteem by finding the high ground that Christ affords us, the same high ground Christ achieved on his cross by publicly forgiving his killers and the same high ground upon which Brandt stood.

For generations, that high ground has granted black people peace and an escape from a type of sorrow that can kill a person from the inside out.

Sadly, it is also true that some black people throughout history have struggled with a type of “Stockholm syndrome,” willing to identify with and even excuse the behavior of those who oppress us. When true forgiveness happens, I applaud it and am taught by it. However, when the “Stockholm syndrome” kicks in, I find it to be sad, angering, unspiritual and a huge detriment to the self-esteem of black people.

There are a number of perspectives on Brandt’s actions, and each perspective has some validity. When reading the comments of Botham and Brandt’s sister, Alissa Charles-Findley, she clearly supports Brandt yet still respects the differing views that others may have of his actions.

Personally, I choose to believe Brandt at his word. He said his decision to forgive Guyger was a product of his Christian faith and an homage to what his brother would have wanted for her life. He also based his actions on the authenticity of her remorse. He said to Guyger, “If you truly are sorry…” After this, he continued speaking to her and then hugged her.

I have no reason not to believe Brandt. He is my brother in Christ who has suffered so much. I am convinced that the forgiveness he offered Guyger brought him healing, and that is something I would never deny him or anyone. I choose to stand with him. In addition to this, I choose to pray for Guyger in hopes that she will be given freedom in Christ so that God may be given even more glory.

It is more important, however, to understand that the concept of forgiveness and justice are not mutually exclusive. The Jean family and any black person can both forgive Guyger and still demand that she meet justice. The prophet Micah combines these claims, “He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.”

One must be dedicated to both mercy and justice. And we can pursue both at once. This joint pursuit of mercy and justice is in God’s character, for he is the type of father who is dedicated to “keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children’s children, to the third and the fourth generation” (Exodus 34:7). In my opinion, Guyger needs forgiveness and justice. I do not think her sentence of 10 years is long enough. Moreover, I do not think that Brandt’s forgiveness in any way downplays the guilt and atrocity of Guyger’s actions.

Brandt’s actions are better understood alongside the actions of all the others in the courtroom that day. When preaching two Sundays ago on this very topic, I emphasized the collective nature of what happened that day. We must be willing to see the power of God working not just through Brandt but through the actions of all those who were following Christ that day. (See Holmes Road Church of Christ’s Facebook page for a sermon entitled “One Body” where Brandt, the family’s and Judge Tammy Kemp’s actions are discussed.)

In one space, Brandt forgave Guyger in a shocking and public way. This act was unusual and could be considered inappropriate in a courtroom. In another space, Allison Jean, Brandt and Botham’s grieving mother, was in the corridors of the courthouse challenging the City of Dallas to hold the police department accountable for what she details as a list of injustices. In another space, Judge Kemp comforted the Jean family and Guyger, the former with hugs but the latter with a Bible. A Bible lesson and a hug — again, these actions are considered by some to be unethical and against the rules.

In all these spaces, we cannot forget that those people who were seeking to follow Christ must be treated as one unified body. For there is only “one body…” (Ephesians 4:4). The sum of their actions painted a picture that is the image of Christ. Brandt looked like Christ on the cross asking...
God to forgive his killers, for they knew not what they were doing. Allison Jean looked like Christ in Matthew 23 when he boldly and publicly challenged the injustice of the Pharisees. And of course, Judge Kemp looked like Christ when he sat at the well in John 4 with the Samaritan woman to whom he offered solace and a future. When we consider all the actions that day of these Christ followers, we see a powerful testimony of the Christian faith and the working of the Holy Spirit. Three people acting on faith from their respective spaces accomplished four things:
1. **They** challenged the justice system.
2. **They** ministered to the soul of the guilty.
3. **They** broke all the rules.
4. **They** set the world ablaze in controversy.

These four things that the collective did that day mirror four things that Christ himself did.

1. **He** held the justice system accountable by rebuking the Pharisees.
2. **He** ministered to the soul of the guilty by teaching and comforting the woman at the well and ultimately by forgiving his killers.
3. **He** broke all the conventional rules of his day when he healed a man on the Sabbath.
4. **He** set the world ablaze with controversy through his life, death and resurrection — a controversy we still hotly debate more than 2,000 years later.

Those three strong, black followers of Christ found high ground in that courtroom. Collectively, they became Christ, and the world reacted to them with praise and misunderstanding just as the world reacted to Jesus. And this makes perfect sense, for Jesus warned us through John:

“If the world hates you, keep in mind that they hated me first. If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you” (John 15:18-19).

The most important thing in all this controversy is not that the forgiveness was too great but that we hope such forgiveness and compassion can be shown to many other criminals, particularly black men who are serving far longer sentences for committing far lesser crimes. My hope is that the Spirit that showed up in the courtroom that day will continue to show up and lead people everywhere to afford all criminals this justice from the high ground of morality.

Those who collectively represented Christ that day and since, including Botham and Brandt’s father, Bertram Jean, through his comments after the fact, accomplished the call God gave to us through the prophet Micah.

They sought mercy. They called for justice. And even in the face of an imperfect justice, they humbly walked with their God by leaving the unknown in his hands.

**B. CHRIS SIMPSON** is passionate about multicultural ministry and helping to heal race relations in our society. He ministers for the Holmes Road Church of Christ, a multiracial congregation in Whitehaven, a neighborhood in which he lives and works on the south side of Memphis, Tenn. He and his wife, Halley, have two children, Elle and Grey.

### Editor's Note

We’re all amazed by the incredible generosity of Robert Wickliffe Comer, about whom we report on Page 1. What a windfall for our brothers and sisters in Tennessee and Kentucky!

By the way, for our brethren in these states, we realize that several nonprofits have contacted you already, asking for a portion of the funds you’ll be receiving. At the risk of piling on, should any of you feel compelled to send some much-needed support to the newspaper that broke the story, we’ll accept it with grateful hearts.

It’s unlikely that many of us ever will be in a position to distribute $35 million to worthwhile ministries. But each of us has something to contribute to future generations.

Recently, *The Christian Chronicle* conducted a survey of our most consistent and generous donors. A large percentage of them told us that they have done little or no estate planning or that they haven’t designated nonprofits as beneficiaries.

Securing our finances so that they benefit the next generation is an important part of stewardship.

And while our children and other beneficiaries must pay taxes on their inheritances, it’s tax-efficient to name a charity as a beneficiary of your retirement plan assets.

We would love for you to consider the *Chronicle* in your estate planning. Please call the *Chronicle’s* attorney, Stephen Eck, at (405) 425-5080 for a free, no-obligation consultation, or email our president and CEO, Erik Tryggestad, at erik@christianchronicle.org and allow us to discuss a plan that works best for you.

It’s amazing what a one-time traveling salesman from small-town Kentucky was able to accomplish in his lifetime.

It’s amazing how the Lord blessed his endeavors with prosperity.

What’s most amazing, though, is how his financial stewardship has resulted in an incredible outpouring of generosity.

May we also find ways this Christmas season to practice generosity — no matter the size of our bankroll.

Although it’s easy for us to get star-struck by the amount of brother Comer’s gift, Jesus teaches us that even two mites have might.

### From Our Readers

**On predators and church autonomy**

I understand the concern over child predators (“It’s time to talk about predators in the church,” Page 3, November). I have dealt with more than a few over the course of my service to the Lord, members and non-members. I am unable to forget the details.

Some absolutely change, and some do not, and they all need to be watched carefully. The decision of the parents mentioned was faulty, and I believe most Christian parents would have exercised more caution.

Having said that, the local church leadership, under guidance of Scripture, is charged with making decisions on how to deal with each situation. I’m wondering if there was a separate assembly for the Corinthians of 1 Corinthians 6:9-11? My reading is that they had been washed and were the assembly. It’s time we respect congregational autonomy in making decisions on how to cope with painful problems.

**RANDY MATHENY | Brookville, Pa.**
‘Visions of Restoration’ calls reader to study history as part of a spiritual life

To echo Edward J. Robinson in the foreword, John Young has written a clear, concise and instructive account of the history of Churches of Christ in America. In “Visions of Restoration: The History of Churches of Christ,” Young does a remarkable job of sketching the large contours of this story in a way accessible even to those with no prior knowledge of it — or who never thought about our churches having a history.

Young, an adjunct instructor at Amridge University and a doctoral student in history at the University of Alabama, starts with a helpful explanation of how members of this body have seen themselves — either as the ones who have always embodied the true church or as a relatively recent movement to return Christianity to first-century purity.

He hints at another idea — that Christ’s church established at Pentecost has, as Christ promised, never ceased to exist, but in diverse times, cultures and languages, it has looked very different.

Young’s personal stance is that Churches of Christ are “perhaps the most thorough” of the movements to return to the pattern of the first century church, apparently assuming readers understand “pattern” alike. Later, however, Young subtly challenges the blueprint pattern theology common in Churches of Christ, pointing out that “restorers often came to very different conclusions about how to interpret scripture” even though using the same rational approach to restore the ancient order. He cites Puritan leader John Cotton and Barton W. Stone as examples.

Young describes Churches of Christ as having made great strides toward restoring that first century pattern, yet not having completed the work, “if it ever can be completed.” This acknowledgment reflects a godly level of humility. Still, in my opinion it fails to focus on the primacy of God’s action in restoration. Though human response is involved, ultimately restoration is not our work: It is God’s.

There are a few factual errors, such as that Alexander Campbell arrived in America in 1808, when he actually arrived the following year. A more substantial problem is that concise studies like this simply cannot tell “the rest of the story.” Nuances and complexities inevitably get lost. One example is Young’s description of Barton Stone’s preaching in favor of adult immersion and against infant baptism. While true, that was not his chief message. In fact, Stone’s refusal to insist on adult immersion was a major source of friction between Stone and Alexander Campbell.

Some of the strongest parts of Young’s study for me are his discussions of divisions. After his treatment of the rift between Disciples and Churches of Christ, he presents the example of T.B. Larimore as an alternative to separation. In the premillennial controversy, he shows how Foy E. Wallace Jr.’s vicious tactics of character assassination set the tone for the later battle over institutions. He then chronicles the rise of resistance to hateful, exclusivist attitudes by more grace-oriented approaches to scripture and the church and describes the gradual drifting apart of Churches of Christ due to different understandings of what scripture is and how we understand it.

In his final chapters Young discusses International Churches of Christ, predominantly black congregations and the role of women in churches. He provides discussion questions for each chapter that skillfully direct readers to deeper reflection on the material’s implications.

In one of those questions — “Have you ever thought of historical study as part of a healthy spiritual life?” — he gently prods readers to see learning history as a spiritual discipline that humbles us and enables us to see the church more like God sees it.

Young’s brief volume can help us do just that.

There are a few factual errors, such as that

ALBERT TWEATT


Amy Bowman

I love Disney World. I’m pretty much always planning my next trip, at least in my head. I talk about it all the time. It’s a problem.

And I work in children’s ministry, so I’m always looking for good devotional books geared towards kids and families.

It’s no surprise that several people suggested I check out Albert Thweatt’s “Disney Devotionals: 100 Daily Devotionals Based on the Walt Disney World Attractions.”

Thweatt, a member of the Crieve Hall Church of Christ in Nashville, Tenn., wrote the book after he started working the night shift as a paramedic. He had to miss his nightly devotionals with his two boys, so he started writing devos for them to read later. After the first few, he decided that he needed a theme. He went with what his family loves most — Disney World.

As much as I love the Lord and love Disney, I was skeptical. How was he going to make Disney World a spiritual experience?

The whole idea seemed... goofy.

The first devo starts at the Welcome Gate, explaining the excitement of arriving at Disney.

Thweatt gives some fun Disney trivia and then compares this anticipation to the overwhelming joy we will feel as we stand at heaven’s gate someday.

He gives scriptural references and ends with encouragement for us to strive for that goal. The devos are simple, easy for kids of all ages to understand and well written.

Thweatt moves through each attraction as if you’re walking through the theme park. He tells Disney facts that even I, a self-proclaimed Disney aficionado, didn’t know.

And his biblical application is really clear and good. Each devotional is two pages or less — a great length for families with young kids. And the biblical application can spark some great discussion with older kids, too.

AMY BOWMAN

is a children’s ministry assistant for the Brentwood Hills Church of Christ in Nashville, Tenn. She co-hosts “Sunday Lunch,” a podcast, available on Apple podcasts or sundaylunch.libsyn.com.
NEW AND NOTEWORTHY

GOD’S NATURE

Who is God? How do we even begin to answer the question? Is he so infinitely great that our words cannot possibly capture his essence? Or is God so intimately personal to our hearts and souls that it is impossible to articulate his character and nature?

Yet, whether God is infinitely high or intimately personal, we have one way to know God in a way we can collectively fathom—through the life and ministry of Jesus Christ.

“Thinking on God” is an earnest and thoughtful collection of biblical and religious arguments for the proof of God’s existence, and author Don Ruhl dwells on the character of both God and humanity while helping fellow believers see how reflecting on God’s majesty and awesome power can bring us closer to him and his creation.

The life and ministry of Jesus Christ play a central role in our getting to know God, and it is through Christ that we see God’s essence—his power, glory, grace, patience, mercy, holiness, and goodness. And yet in the end, it may surprise us that the King of kings will ultimately serve us, his loyal servants, in humility.

We see God in his creation, and we know God through Christ. When we seek God and come to know him in all his majesty, power, and grace, we will discover who God is and be able to set a course for our lives. Let us therefore not go through a single day without thinking on God.

CHRISTIAN BOARD GAME
Derek and Lucy White. True Frenemies. Mount 21 Productions, 2019. $29.99, shipping included. Order from Mount21.com, send email to sales@mount21.com, or call (515) 988-3584.

Need a novel gift idea for Christmas not available in stores? Well, we might have the perfect solution for you!

True Frenemies is a family and party game about good friends, bad friends, and very bad friends. In “True Frenemies” you will need to bring not only yourself, but also another player, whom we will call your Secret Friend, to the Tree of Life.

The catch? You will know your own Secret Friend, but you will have no idea who has you as a Secret Friend. Get ready to enter a mixed-up world where your friends may suddenly turn on you and your worst enemy saves the day. Success in this game requires deception, cooperation, as well as acts of assistance alongside betrayal.

Play on a digitally produced 20” x 30” gameboard that by itself is a work of art. Includes 120 Bible Says cards, 80 Face the Music cards, 40 Say a Little Prayer cards, 40 SinTakes cards, and 100 Submission tokens. Everything beautifully rendered! Check us out, and let others know about our game! Ages 8+

BIBLE CLASS STUDY

“Journey into a Faith-Filled Life” explores the power of God’s Word and the faithful example of the followers of God found in Hebrews Chapter 11. By reflecting on the Bible text, coupled with the illustrations and stories, our faith will grow stronger. There is much we can learn from these men and women who lived faith-filled lives. The thirteen-chapter book has thoughtful discussion questions designed to examine, experience, and embrace faith.

BEGIN YOUR HEALING

Did you know God blesses you according to the power of your own faith? (Ephesians 3:19-21)

You are going to rediscover the blessings God gives you each day. You will not be able to keep this to yourself.

Extraordinary examples of blessings, faith and deliverances are written all through the Bible. Now your blessings can be added to the chorus of witnesses who believe and have been blessed by our God.
From Morning to Evening: Every Day With Jesus
by
Mike W. Ireland

An intimate study of the life of Jesus through the Gospels.

The world is a place of voracious needs. We must not look there to be filled. Jesus - His abundance, His very presence - is the answer to our emptiness. Our deepest need is the Prince of Peace.

From Morning to Evening: Every Day with Jesus is an intimate study of the life of Jesus through the Gospels. Experience Jesus in a compelling way daily as you sit quietly and journey through the pages of His story. Soak up His light and be so filled that you become His reflection.

Available through Amazon, Barnes & Noble or directly from the author at: dkireland@harding.edu.

Searching for hope? Try Iraan

Iraan, Texas

Where ya headed next?” I get asked that a lot. Sometimes I say Nashville. Other times, Nigeria. But this time I got to say, “I’m headed to Iran, and I’m gonna preach.”

I left out a pretty crucial “a” just then. It’s Iraan, pronounced “Ira-Ann,” a town of about 1,000 souls in Pecos County, Texas. It’s named after Ira and Ann Yates, owners of the ranch upon which the town was built.

The Iraan Church of Christ is a longtime supporter of The Christian Chronicle, and as I was signing a thank-you note for their recent contribution, I scribbled out an invitation to guest-preach, should they ever need a fill-in. Just days later, I got a call from Jimmy Watts, one of the church’s elders. They don’t have a full-time preacher, and they’d love to see me anytime. I packed my bags and headed for West Texas.

I drove in from Midland, where I had enjoyed the hospitality of some longtime friends from the Golf Course Road Church of Christ. I got to Iraan about 30 minutes before Bible class at 10 a.m., but the elders—brother Watts, David Brown and Zane Turk—had been there much longer. The women’s track team from the high school was headed for a tournament in Lubbock, and one student on the team was a church member. Sunday morning in Iraan, Texas.

So the elders had a special prayer session for them at 7:30 before they headed out. Nineteen folks showed up.

As I set up my PowerPoint, trucks with cattle guards filled the parking lot. Church members hung their cowboy hats on hooks shaped like horseshoes. The two rest rooms bore metal signs that read “Adam” and “Eve.”

About 60 people came for worship—a mix of ranchers and oil field workers, old-timers and young families with noisy infants. The men here take turns preaching and leading devotions before the Lord’s Supper. There’s a real sense of buy-in from the members. Before worship, brother Watts talked about the church’s upcoming “Free Garage Sale” for the community.

As I preached, I told them the stories that have inspired me during my 18 years with the Chronicle—stories of faith from the faraway lands I’ve visited. I made sure to mention the Iranian refugees I met in Europe who were baptized by our brethren in Greece and Austria. (It seemed appropriate to talk about Iran while in Iraan.)

But I think the church members inspired me a lot more than I inspired them. I had to know their secret.

“We’re family,” said Katie Briscoe, one of the church members. “We love each other and have a lot of love for people. There are no strangers here. You’re not a visitor for long.”

Several of the church members said they find unity through regular meals together. (We enjoyed some Frito chili pie in the fellowship hall after worship before a few of the members had an afternoon Bible study.) They also build unity among the area congregations through their involvement in the annual Pecos River Family Encampment.

It’s rustic, they said, and wonderful. I’ll be honest: I’ve had more than a few moments of doubt about the future of our fellowship. We’ve all seen the numbers and heard the prognostications.

Just a few days ago, I got a call from a small, rural church in Texas: “Better take us off your mailing list. We’re shutting our doors.”

But worshiping with the Iraan Church of Christ gave me a feeling I haven’t had in a long time—hope. That’s why I say God bless Texas. And God bless Iranians and Iraanites alike. (Or is it Iraanites?)

May God bless us, every one.

Erik Tryggestad is president and CEO of The Christian Chronicle. Contact erik@christianchronicle.org. And let him know if you need a fill-in preacher.

Crossword answers | From Page 33

1. Lot’s daughters
2. Abraham’s servant
3. Virgin Tithers
4. A tale of 10
5. Testament
6. Ten Commandments
7. Encephalitics
8. Greek word for “alpha”
9. Stratification
10. Stall
11. God’s Law
12. Two old men
14. Psalm
15. Praise
16. PSALMS PRAY
17. Two old men
18. Psalm
20. Psalm
21. Praise
22. PSALMS PRAY
23. Two old men
25. Psalm
26. Praise
27. PSALMS PRAY
28. Two old men
29. Say, “Amen”
30. Psalm
31. Praise
32. PSALMS PRAY
33. Two old men
34. Say, “Amen”
35. Psalm
36. Praise
37. PSALMS PRAY
38. Two old men
40. Psalm
41. Praise
42. PSALMS PRAY
43. Two old men
44. Say, “Amen”
45. Psalm
46. Praise
47. PSALMS PRAY
48. Two old men
49. Say, “Amen”
50. Psalm
51. Praise
52. PSALMS PRAY
53. Two old men
54. Say, “Amen”
55. Psalm
56. Praise
57. PSALMS PRAY
58. Two old men
59. Say, “Amen”
60. Psalm
61. Praise
62. PSALMS PRAY
63. Two old men
64. Say, “Amen”
65. Psalm
66. Praise
67. PSALMS PRAY
68. Two old men
69. Say, “Amen”
70. Psalm
71. Praise
72. PSALMS PRAY
73. Two old men
74. Say, “Amen”
75. Psalm
76. Praise
77. PSALMS PRAY
78. Two old men
79. Say, “Amen”
80. Psalm
81. Praise
Vice President for Research (VPR)

The president and the provost invite qualified candidates to apply for the vice president for research position, responsible for setting and executing the strategy for maturing and growing the research enterprise at ACU. The VPR will promote and facilitate scholarship and research, as well as strengthen the university's position with external funding sources and strategic partners. The VPR is responsible for enhancing the university's research infrastructure and leading the offices of Research and Sponsored Programs, the Office of Undergraduate Research, and the compliance functions. An earned doctorate is required, with preference given to applicants who have served at least 10 years in higher education or commensurate experience in a research setting at an organization such as NASA or a research lab. Demonstrated success as a VPR (or assistant VPR at another university) is preferred.

Dean of Library Services and Educational Technology

The provost invites qualified candidates to apply for the dean of library services and educational technology position. The dean leads and manages all aspects of library information, academic technology, and academic publishing services at ACU, including the following units: ACU Press, AT&T Learning Studio, Educational Technology (The Innovation Foundry), Information Services, Maker Lab, Scholars Lab, and Special Collections and Archives. Applicants must have demonstrated knowledge and experience of the theory and practice undergirding the 21st-century university library, including educational technology and academic publishing. An ALA-accredited M.L.I.S. degree is required, and preference will be given to applicants with at least five years of progressive experience in academic library leadership, as well as those with a doctorate. Information about ACU’s Margaret and Herman Brown Library can be found at acu.edu/library.

See acucareers.acu.edu for complete descriptions of these positions. Review of applicants will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled. Nominations of and applications from qualified women and minorities are especially encouraged. ACU is affiliated with the fellowship of the Churches of Christ. ACU does not unlawfully discriminate in employment opportunities. The mission of ACU is to educate students for Christian service and leadership throughout the world.
The Lord Is Come!

Signs of the season are everywhere: lights, ornaments, decorated trees, and wreaths swathed in red ribbon. Amid the to-do lists and hustle and bustle, it’s easy to see Christmas is in our midst, but it’s easy to forget why we celebrate.

Let’s remember God’s greatest gift—His Son, our Lord and Messiah, Jesus Christ—whose presence in the world for just a few short years changed it for all of eternity. Lubbock Christian University humbly bears His name and strives to follow the example of the original Life-Changer, one student at a time.