By Bobby Ross Jr. | The Christian Chronicle

White Settlement, Texas

The West Freeway Church of Christ, a close-knit congregation of about 280, didn’t get to finish its worship assembly that Sunday morning.

So Monday night — roughly 30 hours after a gunman killed two beloved Christians during the Lord’s Supper before an armed member fatally shot him — the suburban Fort Worth church came together.

A standing-room-only crowd squeezed into the church fellowship hall, next door to the closed auditorium where the Dec. 29 shooting occurred, to grieve, pray and sing hymns such as “Amazing Grace,” “Precious Memories” and “It Is Well With My Soul.”

“What happened yesterday is not something that we will ever be able to explain,” minister Britt Farmer told church members, who shared hugs and tears before the special gathering as canine officers made sure the building was secure.

“There is evil in this world, and evil took two of my dear friends yesterday,” Farmer added. “Not a bullet from a gun — evil. Not ideology — evil.”

See Shooting, Page 6

Preacher loses two close friends in attack

BY BOBBY ROSS JR. | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

White Settlement, Texas — Britt Farmer had his head down, focusing on the sermon he was about to preach.

That’s when the 60-year-old minister heard a gasp, followed by gunshots and screaming at the West Freeway Church of Christ.

“I dove down between the pews, which is what we told everyone to do,” Farmer recalled, telling his story from the same second-row pew where he witnessed the deadly attack Dec. 29.

In the past few years, the congregation west of Fort Worth had beefed up its security team and trained members for a real-life nightmare such as this.

“We need to do something,” West Freeway member Jack Wilson had said after a Nov. 5, 2017, massacre at the First Baptist Church of Sutherland Springs, Texas, that claimed more than two dozen lives.

Now, on the Sunday between Christmas and New Year’s Day, a gunman had opened fire at the back of the West Freeway auditorium, shattering the peace of the congregation’s weekly observance of the Lord’s Supper.

Normally, Farmer would have been sitting farther back with his wife, Lisa. She doesn’t like it so close to the front. But she was out of town, celebrating the 41st
God’s Word compels us to “Preach the Word” (2 Timothy 4:2). These timeless words, spoken to a young preacher have application in all our lives. Every Christian should feel the pull of their heart to Preach the Word, no matter their situation of life.

At Sunset, we are committed to equipping you to serve God. We offer opportunities for you to find your place to Preach the Word. Come learn how you can Preach the Word in answer to Paul’s charge.
Why minister talked to me about shooting

WHITE SETTLEMENT, Texas

A few minutes after noon Dec. 29, my iPhone started ping with messages from friends — alerting me to a shooting at the West Freeway Church of Christ in this Fort Worth suburb. “One of my friends’ parents goes there,” my sister, Christy Fichter, texted. “Said her dad was carrying … not sure if that means he shot the shooter or not. A little too close to home for sure.”

As it turned out, her Facebook friend Jaynette Barnes’ father — Jack Wilson — was the heroic church security team leader who stopped the bloodshed. The former reserve sheriff’s deputy gunned down Keith Thomas Kinnunen, 43, after he fatally wounded two beloved Christians: Richard White, 67, and Anton “Tony” Wallace, 64. The shooting lasted just six seconds but felt like so much longer to those who endured it.

As I searched online for any reliable details, I came across a link to the church’s YouTube livestream of its Sunday morning assembly. I fast-forwarded through the video until I came to the part that will be seared in my brain forever.

I heard the shots and the screams. I saw the bodies fall. And I burst into tears.

In Burundi, reveling in the Word

Christians in the small, East African nation of Burundi rejoice as they open something few of them have held before — their own copy of God’s Word. “They Need Bibles” is an initiative launched by graduates of the Bible Training Center, a school of ministry associated with Churches of Christ in the West African nation of Benin. The effort has placed more than 25,000 Bibles in five languages in the hands of believers in 11 African countries. Learn more at TheyNeedBibles.com. The Benin school, which recently began its 25th year, trains ministers for French-speaking nations in Africa, many of which have predominantly Muslim populations.

The fires Down Under

AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIANS do what they can to serve those displaced by record-breaking blazes, as they ponder faith and climate.

BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

Joel and Mink Gough welcomed their first child into the world amid “catastrophic” fire warnings in their neighborhood. That’s Australia’s highest danger level. Mink’s mother and sister, from Thailand, were visiting Australia for the first time to meet their new granddaughter, Eliana. The fire threat made things “pretty scary — for them and for us,” Joel Gough said.

Australia’s record-breaking fire season has presented a quandary for Christian couples like the Goughs, who live in Gosford in the hard-hit state of New South Wales. Both are graduates of South Pacific Bible College in New Zealand, a school associated with Churches of Christ. Australians who haven’t prayed in years are praying now — for rain, Joel Gough said. “People are thinking about God in their desperation,” he said. “But there has also been a lot of criticism of our conservative, evangelical prime minister for not acknowledging climate change.”

One town, one church once again

BY ERIN FLOYD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

Since she was 4 years old, Maxine Vaden has worshiped with fellow Christians in Mount Vernon, Ohio. But when she was 10, the town’s Church of Christ split due to a dispute.

Now, at age 70, Vaden is excited to see the church come back together again. “It feels like a family is whole again,” she said. “It just feels right.”

For the past six decades, the Newark Road Church of Christ and the Eastside Church of Christ met separately in this community 40 miles northeast of Columbus.

However, the two bodies recently decided to merge and become the Mount Vernon Church of Christ.

On Jan. 12, the newly formed church celebrated with a special Sunday service followed by a ribbon cutting as members made the merger official.

American Independents do what they can to serve those displaced by record-breaking blazes, as they ponder faith and climate.
However, I quickly composed myself because I am a journalist. I had a job to do. Sadly, it's one I've had to do far too often since my first experience with a major tragedy a quarter-century ago: the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing.

The rest of the afternoon is a virtual blur: I put together an initial story for The Christian Chronicle's website. I posted on Facebook and Twitter about what I knew. I did an interview with the Fort Worth Star-Telegram about what I saw on the video. After authorities took down the video, I explained to a New York Times reporter who emailed me that I didn't have access to it.

I had West Freeway minister Britt Farmer's cell phone number in my contacts, but I chose not to call him in the immediate aftermath. I did send him an email expressing my interest in talking to him when he felt like it. Shortly after 10 p.m. that Sunday, he texted me and said he was free to talk. I got out of bed, where I was still following news of the shooting on social media, and called him.

My father, Bob Ross, and Farmer both attended the now-defunct White's Ferry Road School of Preaching in West Monroe, La. Our families knew each other at the old Midtown Church of Christ in Fort Worth in the 1980s.

Decades later, Farmer is one of a few hundred ministers and church leaders on a reader feedback email list that I maintain for my Chronicle work.

“It’s been a long day,” Farmer told me as we discussed the church's plans for a service of healing the following night.

Farmer said he was getting inundated by media calls. But he didn’t want to talk to CNN or “Good Morning America.” He wanted to talk to me.

“I lost my best friend today,” he said, referring to White. “In fact, both of them were two of my best friends.”

Farmer told me he trusted me and knew that, even if I asked uncomfortable questions about what happened, it would be “from a good heart.” I told him I'd make the three-hour drive from my home in Oklahoma City to White Settlement the next morning.

“I love you, brother,” I told him before the call ended. “I’m praying for you. I’m just so sorry about all this.”

“I love your mom and dad a bunch,” Farmer replied. “I loved watching you grow up. You've done well, and I'm proud of you.”

I interviewed him the next day and was the only media type allowed in the members-only service Monday night. Farmer made a general statement to the press as scores of people gathered outside the church for a prayer vigil. The Associated Press and many other news organizations quoted our Chronicle coverage in their reports.

A journalist friend texted me and said of Farmer's approach, “That's nice for The Christian Chronicle but really bad for media relations.”

I don't know. I'm a proud journalist who believes in the vital role of the free press. But at times such as these, I often wonder — going all the way back to the Oklahoma City bombing — why our noble profession can't come up with a better way to tell important stories without overwhelming victims.

In Farmer's case, should he really be expected to respond to 150 media calls on the same day that two close friends are murdered in the most horrific fashion possible?

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

PHOENIX — When the time came to dream of a new approach for interactive learning for children at the Camelback Church of Christ, leaders wanted something so different that it would take a village to pull it together.

That’s exactly what happened with the introduction of “Bibleville,” minister Richard Perry said. He said he hasn’t seen anything quite like it in the Valley of the Sun — as the Phoenix metro area is known — or the whole Southwest.

“We have created six themed classrooms and 36 storefronts, like walking down the street of a small town,” Perry said. “All biblically based, of course.”

Boys and girls at Camelback now may spend class time at the Bible History Museum or Majesty Theater. Other inviting spaces include “Dr. Luke, M.D.” and “Joseph’s Fine Men’s Clothier,” to name a few.

KENTUCKY

BOWLING GREEN — The 200-member Mt. Pleasant Church of Christ began 2020 in prayer — the third year of its initiative to start each new year with a time of focused conversation with God.

“This year, our prayers focused on concern for our community, the lost and those who are sick, but also for the loss suffered recently at the West Freeway Church of Christ,” minister W. Tom Hall said, referring to the deadly Dec. 29 shooting that left three dead, including the gunman, at the Texas church.

The Mt. Pleasant church was honored to ask for protection and blessings for its Fort Worth-area brothers and sisters, Hall said.

In recent years, the Kentucky congregation has set aside three hours on the first Friday in January for the special prayer.

OKLAHOMA

FORT GIBSON — Henry Petree, a deacon of the Fort Gibson Church of Christ, was recognized by the Oklahoma Department of Corrections as its 2019 Volunteer of the Year.

Petree has spent 50 years ministering to prisoners and facilitating educational and faith-based classes at three prisons. He also helps organize a prison workshop that the Fort Gibson church sponsors to help teach others how to do the same.

The next one will be March 28.

Petree said that history created his destiny. He pointed out that he “got out there doing some things I shouldn’t have been.” Later, he realized that “the only difference between me and the guys in here is that they got caught, and I didn’t. If it hadn’t been for God’s grace, I’d be in here.”

A Corrections Department video said he has invested thousands of hours into the lives of criminal offenders, baptizing hundreds of men and women behind bars.

TENNESSEE

LEBANON — Those with limited vision are most in need of in-person companionship, said Christine Beasley.

This was true 32 years ago when Beasley and her late husband, James, began a support group at the Market Street Church of Christ for those who were blind or living with low vision.

They called the group “Sight Seekers” and invited all interested to meet once a month to receive support and encouragement from one another.

Today, the group is still going strong, said fellow church member Ken Beck, who wrote a profile of the group that ran in the local newspaper, the Wilson Post.

About one-third of the 20 group members and volunteers are part of the Market Street church, Beck said.

Beasley, who has taught children’s Sunday School classes at the church, said that while glaucoma took her vision, her spirit has only been increased.

“We talk about everything, and people tell about losing their sight and how they’ve accepted it. When I lost my sight, I got a lot of support from my church.”

‘Mr. Albert’s Neighborhood’: Tennessee church honors retiring elder

Albert England, 83, served for nearly half his life as a shepherd of the Mt. Juliet Church of Christ in Tennessee. On a recent Sunday, the church surprised the retiring elder and his wife, May Ola, with a video presentation dubbed “Mr. Albert’s Neighborhood” and the naming of a street by the building, now to be known as “Albert Way.” Cheering is elder David Burka. See the video at christianchronicle.org.
SHOOTING: Texas church grieves, prays, sings after deaths

FROM PAGE 1

But the preacher, occasionally overcome with emotion that made it difficult for him to speak, declared that he would not let evil win.

“The battle belongs to God!” he said to amens and applause.

Farmer praised his physical family — all four of his adult children traveled home after the shooting — and his spiritual family for the support they have shown him.

“You are incredible, and I love you, and I mean that from the bottom of my heart,” he said.

Mike Tinius, one of the church’s five elders, wrapped an arm around Farmer and led the church in prayer.

“With all of our hearts, we ache. And with all of our hearts, we love,” Tinius said to God. “What we feel as loss, we know is your gain. Guide us in how we handle the losses … that your way be our way.”

The elder added, “Father, we even grieve the soul of the one who wronged us.”

SHOOTER DISGUISED HIS APPEARANCE

The gunman, identified by authorities as Keith Thomas Kinnunen, 43, slipped into the Sunday service wearing a long black wig, a fake beard and a bulky jacket, witnesses said.

During the Lord’s Supper, Kinnunen pulled out a modified, 12-gauge shotgun with a pistol grip, Farmer told The Christian Chronicle.

Farmer said the gunman’s motive remained unknown. But after seeing a photo of Kinnunen without his disguise, the minister recognized him.

“We’ve helped him on several occasions with food,” Farmer told the Chronicle. “He gets mad when we won’t give him cash. He’s been here on multiple occasions.”

Kinnunen’s first two shots killed church security team member Richard White, 67, who yelled “Drop it!” at the gunman as he reached for his own pistol, and deacon Anton “Tony” Wallace, 64, who held a silver tray as he served communion.

Wallace, a father of two and grandfather of four, was the church’s deacon who oversaw community outreach and visitation. He preached periodically at a predominantly black Church of Christ in Mineral Wells, about 45 miles west of White Settlement. He volunteered each summer at a Christian youth camp.

“He just loved kids,” Farmer said. “Tony was a joy to be around. He loved to sing.”

White, whose wife, Glenda, is a former West Freeway church secretary, was Farmer’s best friend.

“Preachers don’t get friends like that very often,” Farmer said of Richard White, who helped with the congregation’s family ministry and organized those assigned to lead prayers and Scriptures each Sunday. “He never held me to a higher standard.”

The two enjoyed golfing together, and before church, White gave Farmer his late Christmas present.

“It was a box of golf balls, and the dirty dog put ‘Property of Britt Farmer’ on them so if I hit them into the woods, somebody would know I’d done it,” Farmer said.

Both victims were at the back of the auditorium where Kinnunen had taken a seat and left for the restroom during the “meet and greet” time at the service’s start before returning.

He quickly drew the attention of the church security team.

“When he came in, he was under observation. ... This was (a case of), ‘Maybe it’s nothing, but maybe it’s worth looking into,’” said church elder John Robertson, who runs the church’s surveillance room. “We had put him on isolation on one of the cameras back here so we could see that he was behaving at the moment.

“So when he got up between the bread and the cup, or right after the prayer, we said, ‘We need to make an intervention,’” Robertson added.

But before that could occur, Kinnunen pulled out his weapon and opened fire.

As the attacker turned toward the front of the auditorium, he fired a third shot. It ended up in a wall to the right of the pulpit’s stage where the congregation’s children normally bring change — part of a “Coins for Christ” ministry — after communion.

Just as Kinnunen fired his third shot, church security team leader Jack Wilson pulled his own trigger.

Wilson’s single shot struck Kinnunen, who immediately fell to the ground. The next day, a bullet hole was visible in the side wall by the pews where the gunman stood. The smell of gunpowder remained strong.

“The events at West Freeway Church of Christ put me in a position that I would hope no one would have to be in,” Wilson, who was cheered at the Dec. 30 service, wrote on Facebook, “but evil exists and I had to take out an active shooter in church.”

Other church security team members with handguns approached Kinnunen as the six seconds of gunfire ended — the loud blasts replaced with screams and crying from the shocked congregation.

Police arrived within two minutes.

“The citizens who were inside that church undoubtedly saved 242 other parishioners,” said Jeoff Williams, the Texas Department of Public Safety’s regional director. “The true heroes are the people who were sitting in those pews today — the immediate responders who saved their fellow citizens. I just can’t overstated how critical that is for everyone to recognize. It is truly heroic.”

MASSACRE PROMPTED CHANGES

The West Freeway church bolstered its volunteer security team after the Nov. 5, 2017, massacre at the First Baptist Church of Sutherland Springs, Texas, in which more than two dozen people died.

Typically, anywhere from 25 to 30 West Freeway members carry concealed handguns on any given Sunday, Farmer said.

However, he said that number “would have been a lot less” this Sunday because a number of people were away for the holidays.

Hugh Galyean, the church’s volunteer worship coordinator, spent 30 years in law enforcement — first as a Maryland state trooper and later as an FBI agent in Louisiana, Nebraska and California.

Galyean, a member of the church security team, said he had leaned down to take a communion cracker when he heard the first shot.

“And I saw the flash in my peripheral vision and immediately knew it was him,” Galyean said of
At Freed-Hardeman University lectureship, "Chronicle" panel to address church shootings

HENDERSON, Tenn. — A “Christian Chronicle Live” panel will tackle the issue of church shootings during the 84th annual Freed-Hardeman University Lectureship.

Speakers will be Britt Farmer, minister for the West Freeway Church of Christ in White Settlement, Texas; Joey Spann, minister for the Burnette Chapel Church of Christ in Antioch, Tenn.; and Stewart S. Brackin, a retired California police captain who is director of FHU’s Office of Safety and Security.

Bobby Ross Jr., the Chronicle’s editor-in-chief, will moderate the discussion set for 4:30 p.m. Central on Feb. 5 in the main auditorium.

The Dec. 29 killings at the West Freeway congregation marked the third fatal Sunday shooting at a Church of Christ in just over two years.

On Sept. 24, 2017, member Melanie Crow was killed at the Burnette Chapel church. Seven others, including Spann, were wounded.

On April 18, 2019, elder Gordon Parmenter died after an armed man opened fire at the Salmon Arm Church of Christ in the western Canadian province of British Columbia.

TO VIEW THE PANEL LIVE, see fhu.edu/lectureship.

We have already won this battle

The love song “God’s Family.”

The chorus goes:

And sometimes we laugh together
Sometimes we cry
Sometimes we share together
Heartaches and sighs
Sometimes we dream together
Of how it will be
When we all get to heaven, God’s family.

On Dec. 29, brothers — black and white — died, and the body of Christ cried together and came together.

During the most sacred moment at the West Freeway Church of Christ in White Settlement, Texas — the taking of the Lord’s Supper — a shooter stood and opened fire. He killed two members before the leader of the congregation’s security team shot him.

I’ll admit, when I heard about what had happened, optimism almost died in me. A knot grew in my stomach, as I watched a video of the shooting. I felt helpless. But in the hours and days that followed, the church came together.

Hope was not lost.

“This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters,” 1 John 3:16 says.

Richard White, 67, and Anton “Tony” Wallace, 64, both laid down their lives for their brothers and sisters that day.

We live in a world where people will deceive. We see it every day. But this is not God’s way. Now more than ever we must boldly come together, stick together and stand together as the body of Christ.

We need to talk to each other. We must hold each other. We must pray for each other like never before. We must have the courage to leave our comfort zones and engage with people. We must spend time with brothers and sisters from all walks of life.

We are children of the Most High God, and our God is still the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. We have already won this battle.

And though some go before us
We’ll all meet again
Just inside that city
As we enter in.

There’ll be no more parting
With Jesus we’ll be
Together forever, God’s family.

Praise God that our brothers who lost their lives that day have gained the greatest reward.

HAMIL R. HARRIS is a Christian Chronicle correspondent and veteran journalist. He preaches for the Glenarden Church of Christ in Maryland.
Securing the Faithful Training Seminar

The FBI reported a 34% increase in incidents at faith organizations between 2014 and 2018. We offer unique seminars taught by a church elder and expert in prevention who uses biblical principles to address security for churches of all sizes, at a fee any can afford. We are scheduling seminars now; visit our website and contact us if we can help.

www.crimepreventioncenter.org

Fort Gibson Church of Christ
800 S Lee St, Fort Gibson, OK 74434

2020 PrIsOn WOrkShop

Henry Petree
(918) 816-1507
henry@henrypetree.com

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

www.timothyhill.org/blue-ridge-reunion

Javier León

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 any way 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 León

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

Keynote Speakers

Steve Higginbotham
“They Came To Hear And Left Amazed”

Wes McAdams
“Inside Out Christianity”

Keith Parker
“Seeking First The Kingdom”

Chris McCurley
“Building On The Rock”

Sponsored By:
Churches of Christ throughout Oklahoma

Held At:
North MacArthur Church of Christ, 9300 N. MacArthur Blvd,
Oklahoma City, OK 73132

Friday & Saturday,
March 6 – 7, 2020

www.affirmingthefaithok.com

405-621-5962
birthday of their daughter, Lori Squieres.

(Later, Farmer would lament that he forgot to wish Squieres a happy birthday when she, her three brothers and their mother all rushed from various places in Texas to be at the minister’s side.)

The West Freeway church is a pistol-packing congregation that believes in protecting its flock.

There were more than 200 men, women and children in the pews on this Lord’s Day.

“I carry all the time, unless I’m in the pulpit or teaching,” said Farmer, who worked in the lumber business before going into ministry.

Since he was about to step to the pulpit, he didn’t have a gun as he dropped to the ground.

But the woman crouched down behind him did. Kate Branson is a member of the church security team. However, Branson’s mother was visiting that Sunday, and the daughter was focused on her.

“Do you have your gun?” Branson asked Farmer, the West Freeway church’s preacher for eight years.

“No,” he said.

“Here,” she replied, handing him hers.

SIX SECONDS — AN ETERNITY
The gunfire itself lasted just six seconds.

Two quick shotgun blasts claimed the lives of two beloved Christians: Richard White, 67, and Anton “Tony” Wallace, 64.

Almost immediately, Wilson — the church security team leader, who is a former reserve sheriff’s deputy and a firearms instructor — returned fire.

Wilson’s single shot struck the gunman, Keith Thomas Kinnunen, 43, who fell to the ground by a side wall.

Across the auditorium, Farmer didn’t immediately know that White, his best friend, was one of the victims.

The minister’s first instinct was to go check on the wounded, but he wasn’t certain the threat was over.

What if the shooter were still alive?

“Where’s his gun? Where’s his gun?” Farmer, connected to a wireless microphone, said he screamed.

A half-dozen or more armed members drew their weapons and approached the shooter in the attack’s aftermath.

Only later, after seeing a photo of Kinnunen without his disguise, did the minister recognize him as someone the church had fed several times.

Police arrived within two minutes. But to Farmer, it felt like an eternity.

“My hands were hurting,” he said. He was gripping the gun so hard.

“I’ll be honest: I kept holding the gun that I was given, and I kept scouring the audience not knowing if there was a second shooter,” he said.

TENDING TO THE FLOCK
In the minutes after the shooting, Farmer and the church’s elders helped members evacuate the auditorium. Most of the congregation gathered in the fellowship hall.

“I’m going to tell you something: They weren’t out here working with law enforcement, trying to take care of the building and stuff,” Farmer said of the elders. “They were in that room with all of the members — comforting, praying, loving those people. They left that other stuff to people who could do it.”

Elder John Robertson said: “Our job was to take care of the flock. We had several going, ‘I’m scared,’ crawling under the table and stuff like that. We said, ‘I understand, but you’re safe now.”’

Farmer doesn’t know how much time passed — several minutes probably — before Branson approached and asked if he was OK.

“Do you want me to take that?” she said.

“Take what?” he responded.

“My weapon.”

“Oh.”

He had forgotten about the gun he was clutching.

Even though two members lost their lives, Farmer — like law enforcement authorities who praised the church security team’s response — has no doubt the death toll could have been higher. Much higher.

“They have said that this is going to be a model church, that this situation will save lives in other places,” Farmer said, quoting Texas public safety officials.

He takes solace in that.

“Britt’s poise and calmness have helped his church to face a most trying situation,” said Jim Hackney, a fellow Texas preacher who has known him for more than 40 years.

“I could not be more proud of him and pray God continues to use him powerfully in the days ahead.”

For Farmer and his grieving congregation, healing will take time — a lot of time.

His faith sustains him, he said, but he knows the journey ahead won’t be easy.

“I am in shock,” he said. “I will be for months. It’s going to be hard.”
Hero sacrificed his life for many

HUNDREDS OF MOURNERS, including Texas governor, pay tribute to volunteer security team member Richard White.

BY BOBBY ROSS JR. | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

FORT WORTH, Texas

At first, Glenda White didn’t realize that her husband, Richard, had been shot.

When gunfire broke out during Sunday worship at the West Freeway Church of Christ in White Settlement, Texas, west of Fort Worth, the former church secretary sprang into action.

“She stood in front of me with a gun in her hand, moving children out of harm’s way while her husband — unknown to her — lay in the back shot,” minister Britt Farmer told more than 650 mourners, including Texas Gov. Greg Abbott, at his best friend Rich White’s funeral Jan. 2.

Both husband and wife had trained to protect their fellow Christians as part of the congregation’s volunteer security team. That team of armed Christians was mobilized in response to the Nov. 5, 2017, massacre that claimed more than two dozen lives at the First Baptist Church of Sutherland Springs, Texas, 300 miles south of White Settlement.

“In a time of decision, they moved toward the danger,” Rich White’s brother Steve White said of the couple. Rich White, 67, was fatally wounded in the Dec. 29 shooting along with church deacon Anton “Tony” Wallace, 64.

In just seconds, security team leader Jack Wilson gunned down shooter Keith Thomas Kinnunen, 43, stopping the bloodshed.

“The only good that will come from this is that churches will no longer be seen as soft targets, at least not in Texas,” Rich White’s younger brother Jay White said.

At the memorial service at the Western Hills Church of Christ in Fort Worth, Rich White was remembered as a hero who sacrificed his own life to save many. The sister congregation hosted the funeral because the West Freeway auditorium remains closed for repairs.

“The book of John teaches us that there is no greater love than to lay down your life for your friends,” Abbott told White’s family, friends and fellow Christians, referring to John 15:13. “Rich White lived that lesson.

“Now, here’s what no one knows — what only God knows,” the governor added. “And that is: Who in this church is alive today because of what Rich White did and because of what Jack Wilson did to stop the shooter before others were harmed?”

The top elected official for the Lone Star State’s 28.7 million residents reflected on his own faith journey after a tree fell on him in 1984 — when he was 26 — and left him paralyzed.

“I felt an increasing bond and greater closeness with God,” Abbott, who is Roman Catholic, said of his experience. “As I leaned on God more and more, he truly became my shepherd. Like you, my life was forever changed in an unexpected moment.”

The governor spoke from his wheelchair on a stage adorned with a portrait of Rich and Glenda White and flanked by colorful bouquets. He urged the traumatized congregation to unite as “children of God” and seek the Savior’s guidance.

“In the fullness of time … God will lead you out of the ‘valley of the shadow of death,’” the governor said, invoking Psalm 23:4. “As dark as this day is, with God’s grace, your lives will once again shine brightly. Jesus told us (in Matthew 19:26): ‘With man, this is impossible. With God, all things are possible.’”

A STEP IN HEALING PROCESS

Ron and Leslie Rutledge, members of the West Freeway church since 1985, were among the hundreds of mourners who came to remember White.

Four days earlier, seated on the opposite side of the auditorium from the shooting, Leslie Rutledge at first thought the popping she heard was an electrical problem. When she realized the truth, she dropped to the ground, as trained to do. Afterward, she comforted those who were hysterical, offering hugs and support.

Ron Rutledge was standing in the back, holding a silver tray during the communion. He didn’t see the shots that struck White and Wallace, but he turned his head and witnessed the one that killed Kinnunen.

“As soon as that happened — like I’ve told many people, don’t ask me how I got over there — but I was next to Richard,” Ron Rutledge said. “And he was gone, immediately.”

But Wallace, a registered nurse,
remained conscious and said he needed help. Ron Rutledge and other church members tended to him until emergency personnel arrived. Wallace later died at the hospital.

For the Rutledges — like the rest of the West Freeway congregation — the Thursday funeral represented another small step in what is likely to be a long journey of healing.

“Monday was a really tough day for me, really tough day,” Ron Rutledge said. “But Tuesday was better. Wednesday was better. … Today will be a step, and I think it will help.”

VICTIM WAS ‘JOHN WAYNE’

White was an avid outdoorsman who loved to golf, hunt, fish, camp and just be outside enjoying God’s majesty, according to his obituary read at the service. He was an Eagle Scout and decades-long member of the West Freeway church.

“Family jokingly called him ‘John Wayne’ for his classic country cowboy look of jeans and boots,” the obit recounted. “When friends talk about Rich, they use words like loving and loyal, kind, brother, dependable, a servant heart, mentor, selfless, giving, and so many other adjectives that describe his tender and selfless heart.”

Younger brother Jay White joked that Rich White “set the bar pretty high” by having the governor speak at his funeral and the president tweet about him.

“Our prayers are with the families of the victims and the congregation of yesterday’s church attack,” President Donald Trump posted on Twitter. “It was over in 6 seconds thanks to the brave parishioners who acted to protect 242 fellow worshippers. Lives were saved by these heroes, and Texas laws allowing them to carry arms!”

Jay White offered this message to his family in the wake of the shooting: “Don’t hate. Let me repeat that word: Do not hate. Do not harbor hatred in your heart toward anyone. Don’t let anger cloud your view of the world and harden your heart to those around you.”

Then he paused. For six seconds. “That’s not very long, is it?” he said. “Last Sunday, evil confronted good in a battle that is as old as time. … And this time, good triumphed over evil.”

GUNMAN HAD CRIMINAL RECORD

Kinnunen had an extensive criminal record and psychological history that would have barred him from legally buying the shotgun he used during Sunday’s attack, according to The Associated Press.

The shooter slipped into the Sunday service wearing a long black wig, a fake beard and a bulky jacket, witnesses said. Farmer told The Christian Chronicle that he recognized Kinnunen after seeing a picture of him without the disguise.

The church had helped him with food on several occasions, but he got mad when they wouldn’t give him money, the minister said.

“I can tell you with absolute certainty that had that intruder simply entered the church and asked Rich for help — food, clothes, a ride, gas, even the shirt off his back — he would have given it to him with a smile,” Jay White said at the funeral.

“I’ll go further,” the victim’s brother added. “If that man had lowered his gun, Rich would have talked to him and offered to help him as the man of God he was. Hate was not in his vocabulary.”

White’s daughter Kristy Moreland told the congregation about trips she and her father took to West Texas when she was a teen. She’d see historical markers and ask to stop. Her dad would joke that he already knew what the marker said: “Well, that was the first Dairy Queen, and it burned down.” And later, “That was the second one, and it burned down, too.”

“Dad, until we meet again at Dairy Queen, I love you,” Moreland said.

In delivering White’s eulogy, Farmer said he’ll never have a better friend. “I hurt like I’ve never hurt before,” he said.

But he said White lived his life in such a way that he saved many — even before the shooting.

“There are people here today because Rich White taught them about God and furthered their faith and strengthened their faith, myself included,” Farmer said.

He ended the funeral with a prayer.

“We ask, Father, that you comfort our hearts and wrap your arms of love around us,” Farmer said, “and let our tears heal us from the inside out, and let us know that you are God.”
TONY WALLACE, a West Freeway Church of Christ deacon, loved God, his family and nursing.

BY BOBBY ROSS JR. | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

FORT WORTH, Texas

Tony Wallace wasn’t afraid of dying.

The beloved deacon talked often about heaven, friends and family members recalled at the church shooting victim’s funeral Jan. 11.

“He knew heaven was where he was going to go,” said his daughter Sarah Wallace, joined on stage at the Altamesa Church of Christ by her sister, Tiffany Wallace. “Even though we didn’t plan for it to happen this way, he died in the house of the Lord, serving.”

Anton Lamont “Tony” Wallace, 64, was killed Dec. 29 while serving communion at the West Freeway Church of Christ in the Fort Worth suburb of White Settlement.

The beloved deacon died along with security team volunteer Richard White, 67, when a gunman opened fire during the Lord’s Supper. Security team leader Jack Wilson returned fire, fatally wounding the shooter, Keith White, 67, when a gun- man opened fire during the moment of turmoil, I want us to understand that Tony died in peace because he ran his race well.

“He was faithful to his God,” added Morrison, who grew up worshipping with Wallace at the Sixth Avenue Church of Christ in Mineral Wells, Texas, about 50 miles west of Fort Worth. “He was diligent in sharing the Gospel. He was diligent in ministering to others.”

Wallace was reared in a military family, and his late parents — Sgt. Casper P. and Mildred Ward Wallace — instilled a strong faith in him. The Sixth Avenue church met in a white shotgun building with red carpeting — “an old school church,” Morrison said. Every Sunday, C.P. Wallace would insist on leading “Count Your Blessings,” which Morrison still remembers was No. 33 in the congregation’s gold hymnal.

“There’s no question where Tony got his faith from,” the preacher said.

At the family’s request, West Freeway minister Britt Farmer read three Bible passages — Ecclesiastes 3:1-8, Lamentations 3:22-33 and John 14:1-3 — while Sixth Avenue minister Earnest Massey offered a prayer of supplication.

Raymond Schultz led the congregation in singing “Blessed Be Your Name,” “It Is Well With My Soul,” “Just a Little Talk with Jesus” and “My God and I.”

Only vague references were made at the funeral to the manner in which Wallace died.

“I wanted to avoid the service focusing on his last moments in such a way that it overshadowed or outshined the tremendous life impact Tony had on so many over his lifetime,” Morrison told The Christian Chronicle. “Personally, I wanted his life of good works in Jesus’ name to be the focus.”

‘KINDEST MAN I EVER KNEW’

Wallace wouldn’t want anyone to be sad about his death, fellow nurse Laurie Dirks said.

“He would want us all to know how beautiful heaven is,” Dirks said. “He would want us all to share good memories of him. He will always be in our hearts. Tony was the kindest man I ever knew. I loved him like a brother.”

Another nurse, Dinah Cooke, said that everyone knew Wallace was a Christian by the way he lived his life and served others.

“He was always willing to preach at the local nursing homes and assisted-living facilities,” Cooke said. “He was the most genuine
person and so generous with his time. ... Being a nurse just fit him perfectly. He was always serving in his profession, at church and in life. And he embodied the meaning of strength with meekness.”

Ron Rutledge, a West Freeway member who helped tend to Wallace after the shooting, said his “kind, compassionate, caring” friend lived a life that always pointed people to Jesus.

“Here lately we’ve been studying for Bible Quiz at LTC,” Rutledge said, referring to the Leadership Training for Christ program. “Guess where Tony was? Sitting in the room, ready to help any of the kids as he studied the same material they were studying.”

HIS DAUGHTERS’ FIRST LOVE

Sarah Wallace’s voice choked with emotion as she shared memories of her father. Tiffany Wallace leaned her head comfortingly on her sister’s shoulder as Sarah Wallace read the statement prepared by the sisters.

“As a little girl growing up, you have many firsts,” Sarah Wallace said. “You have your first kiss, your first dance and your first love. For us girls, that first love was our dad. Of course we loved our mom just as much as our dad, but our dad was our whole world.”

The sisters said they will miss their dad’s corny jokes and his life speeches. The speeches got longer as the daughters grew older and always included biblical references.

“Right now,” Sarah Wallace said, “I would give just about anything to hear your voice or just to hear you yell at (grandson) Chris one last time for not putting the HDMI cord back in the TV so you could watch sports or Dr. Phil.”

She finished her remarks by reading a poem called “If Only” that was printed on the back of Wallace’s funeral program:

If only we could see the splendor of the land to which our loved ones are called from you and me, we’d understand.
If only we could hear the welcome they receive from old familiar souls so dear, we would not grieve.
If only we could know the reason why they went, we’d smile and wipe away the tears and wait content.
The day which we fear as our last is but the birthday of eternity.

FULL-TIME COUNSELING FACULTY

Heritage Christian University announces an opening for a full-time faculty member in counseling. Preference will be given to candidates with a terminal degree in counseling. Persons with a master's degree who are committed to pursuing a doctorate in counseling may be considered. All applicants should demonstrate strong communication skills and interest in the academic and spiritual development of graduate and undergraduate students. A successful candidate will be a professing Christian, an active and faithful member of the churches of Christ and demonstrate a commitment to Christian education. Applicants must be willing to support the Christian mission and purpose of Heritage Christian University.

Applications will be accepted until Feb. 28, 2020. Interested individuals should submit a letter of interest and curriculum vitae to Dr. Michael Jackson: mjackson@hcu.edu.

For a full list of duties, qualifications and components for the application packet visit: http://www.hcu.edu/now-hiring-full-time-counseling-faculty/
the two congregations had attempted to merge. However, some of those involved in the original dispute resisted, disrupting those plans each time.

But in recent years, the two congregations had been on good terms with many members maintaining relationships across both.

“Mount Vernon is not a huge town — I think the population is around 16,000, something like that,” said Ben Driver, who became the preacher for the Newark Road church in August 2015.

“So with two Churches of Christ in town, you run into people. You know people. A lot of people have kind of gone back and forth between the two congregations over the years,” added Driver, who will remain as the preaching minister for the newly merged Mount Vernon church.

Driver explained: “At one point we were talking about our Sunday evening services, and we were trying to think of some different things we could do, just to give us more variety. Someone said, ‘Well, what if we do a combined service with some of the folks at Eastside on occasion?’ And so we started doing that about once a month.”

Those monthly, combined worship services began in 2018. After a while, members started suggesting combining the two congregations.

“Mount Vernon is not a huge town — I think the population is around 16,000, something like that,” said Ben Driver, who became the preacher for the Newark Road church in August 2015.

“So with two Churches of Christ in town, you run into people. You know people. A lot of people have kind of gone back and forth between the two congregations over the years,” added Driver, who will remain as the preaching minister for the newly merged Mount Vernon church.

Driver explained: “At one point we were talking about our Sunday evening services, and we were trying to think of some different things we could do, just to give us more variety. Someone said, ‘Well, what if we do a combined service with some of the folks at Eastside on occasion?’ And so we started doing that about once a month.”

Those monthly, combined worship services began in 2018. After a while, members started suggesting combining the two congregations.

Each body of believers had an attendance of 40 to 50 people on Sundays, so it just made sense, members and leaders said.

“It just kind of seemed to be the right thing at the right time,” Vaden said. “And everybody was in agreement with it.”

So the congregations made it official. On the special Sunday, the Mount Vernon church had 133 in attendance, with an estimated 50 guests.

Matt Thomas, a former member of the Newark Road church, was the guest speaker. Thomas and his wife, Monica, were members at the church in the early 1990s. Back then, they were starting their family and beginning their journey into ministry.

“Many of those people shaped my faith and influenced my family,” said Thomas, now the minister for the Pickerington Church of Christ in Fairfield, Ohio.

The theme for the event was “A Fresh Start,” according to Thomas. He spoke on the church developing proper character and aligning itself with the mission of Christ — to make disciples as its main work.

He hopes the Mount Vernon church finds its niche in both its character and mission and also in providing inner strength through the common fellowship. He also prays that the congregation proves faithful and fruitful in reaching its small community with the Gospel.

“As they move forward, the young minister, Ben Driver, is very capable,” Thomas said. “He is quite capable of helping them to establish good leadership for the future.”

The church began in 1900 as just a small group of people, Vaden said, and it has continued for more than a century.

“We’ve had a history of both congregations having several preachers come out of it,” Vaden said. “So, even though it didn’t appear that we were doing very much, we really were in the long run. And so, therefore, I think that that will intensify as we go forward as one body.”

She, for one, is excited about the future.

“There’s been no major issues,” she said. “Everything seems to be moving forward beautifully, and everyone seems like one great big family.”

Matt Thomas speaks on “A Fresh Start” at the special service marking the merger.
FRENCH POLYNESIA
TAHITI — There are no known Churches of Christ on this South Pacific archipelago — or anywhere in French Polynesia, a group of 118 islands spread across an area the size of Europe with a combined population of about 276,000.

Barry Baggott, a missionary to the French-speaking world, traveled to Tahiti to encourage a lone Christian who was baptized there two years ago.

Baggott also studied with students in the World Bible School correspondence ministry. He asked for prayers for new believers on the island. The Crieve Hall Church of Christ in Nashville, Tenn., supports the work.

INDIA
DURGAPUR — There’s a new Church of Christ in this city of West Bengal, thanks to a 17-hour train trip, a World Bible School teacher thousands of miles away and the grace of God.

Joel Silsbee, a U.S. church member, taught a student in Durgapur through the correspondence school. Then Indian evangelist Pramod Kumar Suna made the long trek from his home in India’s Odisha state to visit the student, Ankita, and her family.

“How have the souls-saving Scriptures, our hearts were pricked,” Ankita wrote in a WhatsApp message to World Bible School. “Tears came out of our eyes.”

Ankita and five members of her family were baptized. Church members plan to follow up with the new congregation.

THAILAND
KHON KAEN — About 50 members of Churches of Christ in northeast Thailand attended a recent seminar that compared the seven churches in Asia mentioned in the book of Revelation to seven churches that received letters from the apostle Paul.

“We let the leaders tell us which church we studied was most like their local congregation,” said minister Kim Voraritskul.

FEBRUARY 2020
THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE
15
ABERDEEN, Scotland — Julius Donkor has a giving heart — one that’s helping hearts in his native Ghana.

Donkor, who has lived in the United Kingdom for 30 years, worships with the Aberdeen Church of Christ. He was visiting family in his West African homeland when his grandmother became ill. He saw firsthand the scant medical resources available.

“I made a vow that when I got back to Aberdeen, I would do all I could to help,” he told The Daily Record, a Scottish newspaper.

Donkor, a cardiac physiologist at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary, made good on his promise. He collected old medical equipment, including some 200 defibrillators, to take to Ghana. Members of the Aberdeen church and other Churches of Christ in the U.K. donated funds to purchase defibrillator accessories and fund a trip to Ghana to train medical staffers to use the donated equipment.

“Heart disease is a significant problem in Ghana,” Donkor said, “and for people to go into cardiac arrest is quite common. Now they have this equipment. It’s made a big difference.”

For his efforts, Donkor won the first-ever Global Citizenship Award during the recent Scottish Health Awards.

“The real kudos,” he said, “is due to the hospital and the church for making this all possible.”

FIND LINKS to contribute to relief at christianchronicle.org or call (405) 425-5070.
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 • COMMUNICATION SCIENCES & DISORDERS. Seeking a full-time, nine-month faculty member. Preference will be given to candidates holding a Ph.D. Consideration will also be given to candidates holding a master's degree if willing to immediately pursue a Ph.D. Qualified individuals must hold the Certificate of Clinical Competence from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association and state licensure in Arkansas, or eligibility to pursue Arkansas state licensure. Experience with supervising speech-language pathology assistants and familiarity with state licensure requirements for SLPA's is highly desirable. Teaching, academic advising, and clinical supervision at the undergraduate level will be expected.

Submit application materials to Dr. Melanie Meeker, chair, Department of Communication Sciences & Disorders, at mmeeker@harding.edu or HU Box 10872, Searcy, AR 72149.

COLLEGE OF PHARMACY • PHARMACY PRACTICE. Seeking a full-time, twelve-month administrative faculty member at the rank of associate or full professor to serve as Chair of the Department of Pharmacy Practice. Responsibilities include mentoring, developing, and evaluating faculty in the areas of teaching, practice, scholarship, and service; establishing faculty workloads using an annual planning process; and evaluating department goals and objectives consistent with the college and university missions; and maintaining an innovative doctor of pharmacy curriculum. Qualified applicants will have a practice and teaching background commiserate with the expectations of the position, including a terminal pharmacy degree (Ph.D. and/or Pharm.D.). A minimum of ten years within an academic setting is preferred with evidence of three to five years in a managerial or executive leadership position with increasing responsibilities in academic administration.

Submit application materials to Dr. Jeff Mercer, dean, College of Pharmacy, at jmercer1@harding.edu, or HU Box 12230, 915 E. Market Ave., Searcy, AR 72149.

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

COLLEGE OF ALLIED HEALTH • ATHLETIC TRAINING

COLLEGE OF ALLIED HEALTH • PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDIES

COLLEGE OF ARTS & HUMANITIES • DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

PAUL R. CARTER COLLEGE OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION • INFORMATION SYSTEMS

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.
Oh, what it would have been like to hear the voice of Marshall Keeble. The famous traveling evangelist died in 1968, so most Christians alive today never got to hear him preach in person.

Recordings of Keeble’s sermons were not hard to come by in the 1960s and 1970s. A few were even released in the 1990s. But now a new set of sermons is available online for free. Abilene Christian University’s Margaret and Herman Brown Library has received recordings of three of Keeble’s sermons from the 1960s.

Bob Hughes, a retired elder of the Kings Crossing Church of Christ in Corpus Christi, Texas, is the owner of the reels containing the recordings. He’s been working with ACU to make those sermons more widely available.

“The reels are an “invaluable addition” to the library, said Mac Ice, director of special collections at ACU. Ice said the audio recordings Hughes had of Keeble sermons have been curated into a special collection that is now available to the public.

“In them we hear him in his own voice doing what he most wanted to do: preach the Word,” Ice said. “Recordings preserve the tone, pace, inflection, cadence and the emphasis of a preacher’s word,” Ice said. “Having reel recordings is priceless.”

Mark Adams, minister for the Kings Crossing church, said: “Keeble was such an important figure. His approach wasn’t everyone’s, but he brought a lot of people together from different backgrounds.”

Born to former slaves 13 years after the end of the Civil War, Keeble brought an estimated 30,000 souls to Christ before his death at age 89.

His 71-year ministry career included training many others to preach.

Hughes attended Tennessee’s Nashville Christian Institute and spent much time learning from Keeble.

“He said, ‘Boys, I’m doing the driving. You are holding the steering wheel,’” Hughes, 78, said of his travels with Keeble.

He recalls one trip where they rode together from Nashville to Searcy, Ark. It was a cold night in 1958. They stopped near Little Rock to warm up and get some food, but a restaurant owner denied service to the black minister and students. Keeble maintained his composure and his attitude. They went on, Hughes said.

The next day Hughes witnessed Keeble preach to a mostly white audience without a bit of resentment.

“We saw the way he was, and we tried to emulate him,” Hughes said.

Years passed, he said, before he realized the significance of his travels with Keeble.

“In a day when few black preachers were even known among whites, none had as wide an audience among them as Keeble,” Ice said. “Hughes’ recordings, along with ephemeral items such as gospel meeting advertisement cards, are one-of-a-kind and complement the more widely distributed printed books and periodicals.”

Hughes’ recordings, along with other printed materials, including a gospel meeting card, are a great contribution to the library’s special collections, Ice said.

Keeble’s influence helped mold Hughes into the preacher and elder he became. He said the lessons he learned from Keeble have had a lifelong impact on him.

For now, Hughes has donated three audio tapes of Keeble speaking to the ACU library. Two of the recordings contain sermons from a congregational homecoming. One was entitled “Christianity Is Automatic.”

“The world can’t understand the Church of Christ because it is automatic,” Keeble preached. “Nobody but God could make man out of dirt. There is not a Christian here that wasn’t automatically made. No cranking. Just press a button.”

Those recordings were made in July 1966. Hughes has more reel-to-reel recordings to go through.

He believes there may be more of Keeble’s messages on those reels.

LISTEN to the recordings at digitalcommons.acu.edu/crs_audio/video/.
The faith of French Africa

CHRISTIANS ON BOTH SIDES of the Atlantic Ocean celebrate 25 years of evangelism and church growth as they aim for ‘every village.’

BY ERIC TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

HENDERSON, Tenn.

‘A preacher school? Here?’ The idea didn’t make a lot of sense to Bill Morgan.

Several years ago, Morgan, then an elder of the Benton Church of Christ in Kentucky, had traveled to the slander West African nation of Benin, where a new ministry was just getting off the ground. Morgan could only think of 10 or so converts in the entire country of 11 million souls — the birthplace of the French-speaking world.

So why did George Akpabli, the Ghanaian-born evangelist who had just moved to Benin with support from the Benton church, want to launch a ministry training school? A quarter-century later, 2,212 men and women have graduated from the Benin Bible Training Center, which is sponsored by Churches of Christ.

Akpabli recently traveled from his West African home to the West Tennessee campus of Freed-Hardeman University to talk about the school and its American support ministry, French African Christian Education (FACE). During a chapel presentation, Akpabli spoke to students at the university, which is associated with Churches of Christ. After chapel, Akpabli, Morgan and other workers with the ministry from both sides of the Atlantic spoke with The Christian Chronicle about the training center’s impact and upcoming changes.

“There’s no question in my mind that God’s providence is involved in all this,” Morgan said of the ministry.

FROM FRUSTRATION TO FLOURISHING It didn’t seem that way at first. For years, the Benton church had been trying to reach lost souls in a nation thousands of miles southeast of Benin — the French-speaking islands of Mauritius. A couple of attempts using American missionaries had produced little fruit.

Early on, Akpabli would look for someone sitting under a shade tree, approach the person and ask, “Can we talk about God?” He would tell them where he lived — and usually get the response, “Oh, I know the place.”

“So I would say, ‘Come. My wife will cook food, and we will study the Bible,’” said Akpabli, who also preached in Cotonou’s night markets.

Slowly, the new church grew, he said. “But the turning point was church’s early efforts, and believers associated with Churches of Christ. After chapel, Akpabli, Morgan and other workers with the ministry from both sides of the Atlantic spoke with The Christian Chronicle about the training center’s impact and upcoming changes.

“There’s no question in my mind that God’s providence is involved in all this,” Morgan said of the ministry.

FROM FRUSTRATION TO FLOURISHING It didn’t seem that way at first. For years, the Benton church had been trying to reach lost souls in a nation thousands of miles southeast of Benin — the French-speaking islands of Mauritius. A couple of attempts using American missionaries had produced little fruit.

Early on, Akpabli would look for someone sitting under a shade tree, approach the person and ask, “Can we talk about God?” He would tell them where he lived — and usually get the response, “Oh, I know the place.”

“So I would say, ‘Come. My wife will cook food, and we will study the Bible,’” said Akpabli, who also preached in Cotonou’s night markets.

Slowly, the new church grew, he said. “But the turning point was beginning that school.”

GOD PROVIDES, AGAIN AND AGAIN Although Churches of Christ have experienced explosive growth in Africa’s English-speaking nations in the past century, French-speaking nations have lagged behind, Akpabli said. In Benin and Togo, at the suggestion of Hilton Terry, a veteran missionary to these parts of French-speaking Africa, the new church grew, he said. “But the turning point was beginning that school.”

GOD PROVIDES, AGAIN AND AGAIN Although Churches of Christ have experienced explosive growth in Africa’s English-speaking nations in the past century, French-speaking nations have lagged behind, Akpabli said. In Benin and Togo, at the suggestion of Hilton Terry, a veteran missionary to these parts of French-speaking Africa, the new church grew, he said. “But the turning point was beginning that school.”

When Africans in these nations would claim the beliefs of their ancestors and become Christians, “they really put their faith on the line,” Akpabli said.

The Benin Bible Training Center provided much-needed resources for French-speaking Christians, teaching them not only Bible but also farming and other skills they could use to make a living. Few Churches of Christ in Africa, much less French-speaking Africa, can support a full-time preacher. At times it’s been a challenge to support the financial needs of the ministry, said Ed Jones, a Benton church elder who has worked closely with Akpabli. But time and again, the Kentucky church and sister congregations have stepped up to provide. Today the school meets on an 18-acre campus with multiple classroom buildings and dormitories.

A few years ago FACE repurposed an old, yellow school bus and shipped it to Africa to serve as a Gospel Chariot, a mobile evangelism vehicle packed with supplies for gospel meetings in the villages of West Africa.

NEW ROLES, NEW CHALLENGES After a quarter-century at the helm of the school, Akpabli is taking on a new title: director of continuing education and leadership development.

He and his wife, Joyce, will travel across Benin and throughout French-speaking Africa to mentor the school’s graduates, many of whom, he said, are “alone in difficult and challenging mission fields and have no one coming to visit them.”

The Akpablis also will work with the young Churches of Christ these graduates nurture.

Taking on the school’s directorship is Inoussa Iouossa, a Togo native who has spent the past six years under George Akpabli’s mentorship.

“I have some big shoes and responsibilities to fill,” Iouossa said, "but God will help us succeed.”

In Benin and other parts of French-speaking Africa, animistic beliefs remain a challenge for evangelists, Iouossa said. But new generations of Africans are embracing Christianity and seeking out opportunities for higher education.

Workers with the Bible Training Center want to help them, the new director added. Supporters of the ministry in both Africa and America believe that school accreditation is the next step.

But, Morgan said, the ministry remains focused on its primary calling — saving lost souls.

“Our goal is to have a congregation of the Lord’s church in every village in Benin,” he said, “and we’re on our way.”

WEBSITE: frenchafricanmissions.com

Jean Kado, a 1998 graduate of the Benin Bible Training Center, is a new believer in rural West Africa.

Morgan
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.

Child and Family Services

Houseparents:
Shults-Lewis is located in Valparaiso, Ind. We are looking for a Christian couple to serve as houseparents and to minister to children (ages 12-18) who have been traumatized and come from hard places using the TBRI (Trust-Based Relational Intervention) model. We hire the house mom, freeing the dad to look for employment off campus if he so desires.

We offer:
- Competitive salary based on experience.
- Competitive benefit package.
- Excellent training and support team.

Teachers:
We are looking for teachers who are certified or willing to be certified in Indiana for secondary education to work in our on-site school.

If interested please contact:
Angela Robertson, LMSW, Executive Director
(219) 462-0513 ext. 222
www.shultslewis.org

As an employee of Shults-Lewis, you are required to be a faithful member of the Church of Christ, as outlined in the by-laws and updated by the Board of Trustees.

Delving into the history of black churches

By Cheryl Mann Bacon | The Christian Chronicle


Robinson is an associate professor of history and religion at Texas College in Tyler, Texas, where he preaches for the North Tennesha Church of Christ.

A graduate of Southwestern Christian College in Terrell, Texas, he holds advanced degrees from Harding University School of Theology in Memphis, Tenn., and the University of Illinois. He earned a doctorate from Mississippi State University and previously taught at Abilene Christian University in Texas.

He has written several books on the history of African American Churches of Christ. According to “Churches of Christ in the United States,” published by 21st Century Christian, there are 1,172 predominantly black congregations with nearly 200,000 men, women and children in the pews. That represents about 14 percent of the 1.4 million total adherents in the U.S.

In an early chapter, you describe enslaved people first encountering the Stone-Campbell Movement by adopting the religion of their owners. After the war, how did they establish houses of worship, and what motivated them to remain in the movement of those who enslaved them?

Assuming that they had positive or cordial relations with their owners during slavery, they would carry on those principles and convictions that they were taught or at least their parents were taught during slavery.

And so after the Civil War — and it’s not just true of the Stone-Campbell Movement but a lot of other churches — blacks and whites simply went their separate ways. It’s called de facto segregation.

As formerly enslaved people and their children navigated the post-Civil War period to establish Churches of Christ across the South, what were the most important factors in their success?

First of all, had it not been for the financial support of white Christians who cast their support behind S.W. Womack and especially later on Marshall Keeble, a lot of African American Churches of Christ perhaps could have been established, but they would not have been as successful as they became.

But it’s not good enough just to have monetary support. I believe it was the sheer determination, grit and even maybe courage that black preachers had to stand before black audiences, many times their family members, and tell them, “Hey, you are wrong. You’re going the wrong way. We’re going the right way,” and to do it with such passion and regard to sway them out of denominational churches, Baptist and Methodist among others.

You mentioned that sometimes Marshall Keeble and others would come to a town with fervent, exclusionary preaching, have a gospel meeting and then leave, making it difficult for church members to live with neighbors after they left. How did that help or hurt the growth of churches in those communities?

It did make life somewhat difficult for those church members who remained. Sometimes the church would continue to grow and flourish, but it created a distaste in the mouths of their black neighbors and friends and family members, and that would cause the church to acquire a bad name and even hamper its influence as black neighbors would say, “Hey, these are the people who believe they are the only ones going to heaven.”

So that would definitely be a turnoff. In fact, Marshall Keeble himself said that on the one hand some white people hated him because of his race, while a lot of black people hated him because of his religion because he took a stance that said, “I am right, and you’re wrong.”
Keeble is well known among white Church of Christ members who may know little else about the history of the African American Churches of Christ. His collaboration with David Lipscomb and his deference to the white churches may be one reason for this — in addition to his gift as an orator. Is he held in the same esteem today in black churches, or has that deference marred his legacy? Perhaps a little bit of both. He is still highly regarded. The congregation I preach for right now was established by Marshall Keeble in 1935. That’s an amazing story, and there are other congregations across the brotherhood who definitely hold brother Keeble in high regard.

However, there are a number who I think mistakenly view him as an “Uncle Tom.” I believe that’s unfair.

One of the distinctions you draw between the African American Churches of Christ and their Baptist and Methodist counterparts was the degree to which the latter involved themselves in the social and political arena. Do you believe Lipscomb’s support for African American Churches of Christ contributed to that? David Lipscomb is one of my heroes in that he went against the grain of society to champion the cause of racial and social justice. I’m not really sure how much his influence contributed to that when you consider, for example, that the school that bears his name at the time after slavery and during Jim Crow excluded African Americans.

R.N. Hogan in the 1950s argued that David Lipscomb was right on the race question, and Hogan used that to kind of chide white administrators in Churches of Christ who excluded blacks by pointing to David Lipscomb.

You devote a major section of the book to men you call the warhorses. Of the many whose stories you tell, who was the most inspiring or surprising?
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

N.M. CHRISTIAN CHILDREN’S HOME
PORTALES, N.M. — Junior- and senior-high school boys have a new place to call home after the recent opening of Beckham Cottage at New Mexico Christian Children’s Home.

The cottage, designed to house up to 12 children, was named in honor of Monty and Billie Jean Beckham, members of the Jai Church of Christ in New Mexico. They donated a significant portion of the funds needed for the construction, said Allen Mann, public relations director.

“We remain debt-free with our commitment not to build until we receive the money to do so,” Mann said. Other projects planned for 2020 include renovating the 40-year-old campus playground and bringing the space up to current safety standards, he said, noting that $100,000 more is needed before work begins.

New Mexico Christian Children’s Home serves 50 residential children and 40 single-parent families.

HIGHER EDUCATION

OKLAHOMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY
OKLAHOMA CITY — Students at Oklahoma Christian University began a new semester in January with the opening of upgraded dining facilities known as “The Branch.”

The name honors former Oklahoma Christian President Alfred Branch and his wife, Judy.

The Branches were among several donors whose gifts allowed the university to complete the project without using tuition revenue.

Featuring a diverse new menu and seating areas flooded with natural light, the expansion project took five years to complete and was launched by Kurt Hermanson, president of UDining. Hermanson has worked for the university for 40 years and gave $1 million to launch the effort.

“Our staff interacts with students more than anyone else on campus,” Hermanson said. “We see them multiple times a day and have opportunities to know them individually.”

Indeed, Hermanson estimates an incoming freshman will eat about 2,880 meals as he or she pursues a four-year degree.

YORK COLLEGE
YORK, Neb. — York College’s iconic Hulitt Hall is due for a facelift.

A $3 million gift provided to kick-start the largest single renovation project in York’s history will fund that makeover. Steve Eckman, the college’s president, said plans are expected to be finalized this summer.

Constructed in 1903, Hulitt Hall served as York’s music conservatory before becoming dormitory-style housing and later offices and classrooms. Throughout most of its history, it also was the location of the campus mail center. Hulitt will be transformed into a focal point for campus visitors and become a hub for student services, Eckman said.

“It had fallen into disrepair,” he said. “This opportunity to reinvent a campus landmark in a way that will serve guests, students and alumni has been a goal for many years.”

EVANGELISM

KAIROS CHURCH PLANTING
PORTLAND, Ore. — Kairos Church Planting has named Ron Clark, lead minister of Agape Church of Christ since its inception in 2006, as the ministry’s new executive director.

Stan Granberg, founding director of Kairos, said Clark’s appointment was a dream recognized, as he and his wife, Gena, began thinking a decade ago about how ideal it would be if one of Kairos’ church planters was one day appointed to lead the organization.

“Ron and his wife, Lori, were early pioneer planters who accepted God’s call to plant Agape in downtown Portland,” Stan Granberg said. “I am utterly excited.”

Clark said he hopes to see 100 more churches planted “and to see us develop Christian leaders who engage our culture, practice hands-on ministry and proclaim a Gospel that transforms others into disciples of Jesus.”

MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR A LUNCHEON HONORING DR. CECIL MAY

Wednesday, March 4 at 12:30 p.m.
University Church of Christ Fellowship Hall
during the 2020 Faulkner Annual Bible Lectureship.

Help us honor Dr. Cecil May for his lifelong service to the Kingdom of God

HERALD OF TRUTH www.heraldofttruth.org
Teams and teamwork personified the work and ministry of Carl Brecheen, who died Dec. 19. He was 90.

The professor emeritus of Bible, missions and ministry began his career at Abilene Christian University in 1961 and retired in 2007. Brecheen directed ACU’s Bible Teachers Workshop for decades. But his broadest influence began in 1974 when he partnered with his best friend and college roommate, Paul Faulkner. They took their three-day Marriage Enrichment Seminar to more than 90,000 couples in 33 states and seven countries.

Survivors include Smitty, his wife of 67 years, along with two daughters, a son and 10 grandchildren.

Max Craddock, prominent minister and TV speaker in Canada, dies at 77

TORONTO — Max Craddock, a prominent preacher and television speaker in Canada, died Dec. 15. He was 77.

Craddock ministered for the Strathmore Boulevard Church of Christ in Toronto for 30 years. Since 2005, he also had served as the speaker for the television program “Key to the Kingdom.”

He was co-editor of the Gospel Herald, a publication for the roughly 7,000 members of Churches of Christ in Canada.

“I don’t suppose we’ll ever be satisfied until we convert everybody,” Craddock said in a 2009 interview. His other roles included serving as chairman of the board at Great Lakes Bible College, a small preacher training school in Waterloo, Ontario.

Cradock combined his early church work with a ministry overseeing the dormitories at Great Lakes Christian College, later known as Great Lakes Christian High School, and directing the chorus at the school in Beamsville, Ontario.

“Never satisfied that he was doing enough, Max … seemed willing and able to take on more than most others,” Ford said. “In filling all of these roles, Max became known and loved … throughout Canada.”

His survivors include Cledith, his wife of 58 years, along with two children, three grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Brecheen was ACU Bible professor and half of marriage seminar duo

ABILENE, Texas — Teams and teamwork personified the work and ministry of Carl Brecheen, who died Dec. 19. He was 90.

The professor emeritus of Bible, missions and ministry began his career at Abilene Christian University in 1961 and retired in 2007.

Brecheen directed ACU’s Bible Teachers Workshop for decades. But his broadest influence began in 1974 when he partnered with his best friend and college roommate, Paul Faulkner. They took their three-day Marriage Enrichment Seminar to more than 90,000 couples in 33 states and seven countries.

Survivors include Smitty, his wife of 67 years, along with two daughters, a son and 10 grandchildren.
Ronald D. Wright, a longtime minister and elder of the Gray Road Church of Christ in Cincinnati and a former college president and chancellor, died Dec. 28 after a prolonged battle with health problems. He was 72.

He spent his career in higher education, serving as president of Cincinnati State Technical and Community College from 1997 to 2007. During his tenure, the college experienced growth in its enrollment and campus facilities — including an Advanced Technology and Learning Center that included multimedia centers and information technologies labs.

“Dr. Wright was committed to student success, and he initiated efforts to improve student retention at Cincinnati State,” said the college’s current president, Monica Posey.

In 2008, Wright became chancellor of Delgado Community College in New Orleans. Three years later, he was appointed to lead a team tasked with developing Centers of Excellence through the Louisiana Community and Technical College System. Wright worked with faculty at the system’s 16 colleges to determine how to create these centers.

His death came a little more than nine months after he and 17 of his classmates received an apology from Oklahoma Christian University for their arrest and dismissal 50 years ago.

On the morning of March 6, 1969, dozens of students at what was then Oklahoma Christian College flooded the administration building with hopes of speaking to President James O. Baird. Among their grievances was the recent dismissal of 14 students, most of them black, accused of violating curfew rules by attending what the administration called an all-night party. The students believed that the punishment was racially motivated, as white students caught staying out too late were not immediately removed from the college.

Eighteen students were arrested and booked into the Oklahoma County Jail on trespassing complaints. Sixteen of the 18 arrested were black.

Upon their release from jail, the students were expelled and told to leave campus. Wright transferred to another school associated with Churches of Christ, Pepperdine University in Malibu, Calif., and earned a doctorate from Cornell University.

As the 50th anniversary of the incident at Oklahoma Christian University reached out to the former students. Eight responded, and seven of them, including Wright, attended a ceremony in April 2019 in which President John deSteiguer offered an apology for how they were treated.

“I apologize that this institution did not allow black students to enroll until 1961,” deSteiguer told a packed Baugh Auditorium as the seven former students sat on stage. “That is wrong.”

Then, stepping away from the podium and turning toward Wright and his former classmates, deSteiguer said, “And to you, as president of Oklahoma Christian University, I apologize for the way that you all were treated 50 years ago this morning.”

DeSteiguer gave each former student a framed certificate of commendation for their bravery. As Wright received his, he was overcome with emotion.

“I’m ecstatic — delighted unbelievably — to be here,” he said.
**Douglas I. Broyles 1941 – 2019**

Douglas I Broyles, 77, of Jennings, La., passed away August 24, 2019. He was born in Kingsport, Tenn., and he graduated from Southeast Christian Junior College, where he met his wife. He then enlisted in the U.S. Air Force in 1964. After serving in Vietnam and Thailand, he returned to school and graduated from McNeese State University.

He worked for Magnavox of Tennessee for eight years. In 1978, Douglas moved his family to Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, where he worked for ARAMCO Oil Company. During those years, he took his family around the world to over 30 countries visiting missionaries.

In 1984 the Broyles family returned to the states. After being ordained, Douglas was administrative minister for Churches of Christ in Lake Charles, Jennings, and Welsh, La. His family hosted many preachers, missionaries and nine foreign exchange students.

Also a licensed funeral director, Douglas served as an in-house chaplain for Miguez Funeral Home. He was secretary of the Board of Directors of Christian Youth Encampment in DeRidder, La., and he directed Junior Week at the camp for ten years.

Douglas gave his time, talents, and treasure to the Lord’s work. With a very outgoing personality, he cared for people and pushed for the best in them. He loved God, and he loved people. He and his wife, Joyce, were active, lifelong Church of Christ members. Douglas served as teacher, deacon, elder, minister, and even song leader for a time.

He is survived by his wife, Joyce Smith Broyles; daughter, Sandi (Les) Gary; son, Darryl (Tina) Broyles; six grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren. His legacy to them was introducing them to Jesus and leaving a loving example of how a Christian life could be lived.

**Ernest Smith 1934 – 2019**

Family and friends showed last respects for their beloved Ernest Smith of Mobile, Ala., who passed away at the age of 85 on Dec. 12, 2019.

He was predeceased by his parents, William Riley Smith, Sr. and Thelma Evelyn Willis Smith; his siblings, Elizabeth Smith Pitts, William Smith and James Smith. He is survived by his wife, Patricia Ann Duncan Smith; his daughters, Marcella Smith Arnold and Valary A. Smith; his grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Ernest was known as Ernie by many of his friends and family members. He always showed love and respect to Patricia, known as Pat, in every interaction from opening the door for her to assisting her in raising their two beautiful daughters. He put his love for God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit and the church first and foremost every day. He set the example of leader-servant in the church, his professional life as an air traffic controller, as a husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather. All of his children were instructed in the ways of the Lord from childhood both in word and deed.

He served the Lord as an outstanding elder for 32 years. He cherished his lovely wife for 60 years. He was an example to his children, siblings, cousins, aunts, uncles, nieces, and nephews as a true man of God. All who knew Ernie knew he cared about them and loved them. He epitomized the fruit of the Spirit. His legacy continues among the congregation at Creekwood Church of Christ and surrounding churches in the Mobile area. His presence will be missed, but his influence for good will live on for many years. God has welcomed one of His own into that glorious heavenly home.

**Barbara Ann Kee 1944 – 2019**

Barbara Ann Kee was born April 7, 1944, to James “Elmer” and Bonnie (Gayler) Kee in Spur, Texas, and she passed on Dec. 15, 2019, in Searcy, Ark. Her childhood was spent near Lubbock and in Searcy. She attended Harding University and received her Masters of Library Science from Syracuse University. She spent two years in Geneva, Switzerland, and several years in Louisiana as librarian/counselor for the WFR School of Biblical Studies. She received her master’s in Marriage and Family Counseling from the University of Louisiana in Monroe and her doctorate from Texas Woman’s University. She practiced counseling in Richardson, Texas.

Barbara Ann’s passion was sharing the gospel, teaching ladies’ and private Bible studies, and embarking on numerous mission trips to Europe. She also wrote eight Christian historical romance books under the pen name of A. J. Hawke. In 2015, she returned to live in Searcy and attended College Church of Christ.

She is predeceased by her parents; brothers James, Doyle, Wayne, and Norman; sisters Venus, Quada, and Violet; and nephew Daniel. She is survived by brother Windle (Barbara) Kee of Texas, sisters Jeanette (Russell) Schoof and Marie Kee, both of Oklahoma; many nieces and nephews, and brothers and sisters in Christ around the world.

Edward “Cloys” Patton 1938 – 2019

Edward “Cloys” Patton, of Conroe, Texas, entered his heavenly home on December 29, 2019. Cloys was born Jan. 1, 1938, in Jones County, Texas, to Edward and Tommie Patton. He met his wife, Betty Patton, at church in Grand Prairie, Texas, and they were married July 23, 1960.

Cloys was a man of great integrity, while having a playful side. He served his country as an Army medic, served as a deacon in the church, and loved his family. Service and love of family was a common theme in every aspect of his life. His hobbies were woodworking, eating at good restaurants and fantasy football.

Cloys was a man of few words. His reputation and steadfast drive were above reproach and provided security for his wife and family all along the way.

He is preceded in death by his parents and two brothers: Derwood and D Wayne Patton. He is survived by his wife Betty; his children, Alan (Tammy) Patton of Houston, Texas, and Randy (Tonya) Patton of Edmond, Okla.; his siblings, Mary (Durwood) Webb of Gorman, Texas, Peggy Moore of Carlsbad, N.M., and Billy (Linda) Patton of Thompson Station, Tenn.; five grandchildren, many nieces, nephews, cousins, and close friends.

**With Appreciation**

The Christian Chronicle appreciates and acknowledges generous gifts received in honor of Mr. and Mrs. Lee Bickford, John and Rhonda Henley, and Lynn and Joy McMillon; and in memory of Joyce Harrison, Ruth Mobley, Cloys Patton, Rusty Russwurm, and Bob Turner and daughter, Karen.

Submit tributes to milestones@christianchronicle.org. Submissions start at $25.
Linda Bonnin, as senior vice president for marketing and strategic communications at Abilene Christian University in Texas. Philip L. Smith, as chief operating officer for Mission Lazarus, based in Nashville, Tenn. Michael Jackson, as vice president and academic dean at Heritage Christian University in Florence, Ala.

Bonnin

WON: Alea Mitchell, first in engineering in a regional science fair in North Carolina. She attends the Wilkesboro Church of Christ.

Alea Mitchell, 13, poses with her science fair project, which took top regional honors.

PHOTO PROVIDED BY SHELLY MITCHELL

PHOTO PROVIDED BY OKEHMA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

Larry Jurney, Dawn Shelton and Mark Thomas show off their Oasis in the Desert Awards from Oklahoma Christian.

HONORED: Larry Jurney, Dawn Shelton and Mark Thomas, with Oasis in the Desert Awards. The awards, given by Oklahoma Christian University, recognize people fighting to provide journalism in smaller communities in the state. Jurney is an Oklahoma Christian communications professor. Thomas is executive director of the Oklahoma Press Association. Shelton is founder of the Luther Register newspaper.

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

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.

Experienced Children’s Minister - Nashville, Tenn.

Donelson Church of Christ in Nashville, Tenn., is seeking an experienced children’s minister with a servant heart and a passion for Christ and His word. This position will involve partnering with parents to help children grow in favor with God and men. The person in this position will work hand-in-hand with parents and church leadership.

Our Vision: Love God, Love each other, Love the world

We are seeking someone who:
- loves the Lord with their whole heart and is a student of His word,
- preferably has an educational background with an emphasis in Biblical studies,
- has a love for children, their families, and their spiritual development,
- can build and train a community of volunteers,
- has strong communication skills (written and verbal), leadership, and organizational skills,
- can build relationships with families.

If you are interested in this position, please send a resume to:

info@donelsonchurch.org

Donelson Church of Christ
2706 Old Lebanon Rd
Nashville, TN 37214
(615) 883-2566

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 Rd
Hempstead, TX 77445
(252) 923-9181
elders@whelesscoc.org
(512) 923-9181
The Christian Chronicle Crossword

ACROSS
1. Jacob’s son who was sold into slavery.
4. He appeared to the witch of Endor.
7. Loose, sleeveless garment.
10. God saved him after he was cast into a lions’ den.
11. Member of a people first described in Genesis 19. They were enemies of the Israelites.
13. One of the great lights God made during the Creation.
14. Ecclesiastes 5: “Keep thy foot when thou goest to the ___” (three words)
16. Israelite King anointed by No. 4 across.
18. Jesus calmed one (Matthew 8:23-27).
21. Luke 18: “___ men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.”
22. Samson told Delilah if she could ___ his locks of hair.
26. Long curved blade held by angels in Revelation 14.
27. Psalm 119: “___ my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law.”
30. God caused a ___ to pass over the earth and the flood subsided.
31. Light carried by the wise and foolish virgins.
32. “Acts and the letter to the ___.”
34. Narrow sailing route, for short.
36. Childhood home of Jesus.
38. 1 Peter: “For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might ___ in his steps.”

DOWN
1. Brother of 1 across. He got his brother sold to the Ishmaelites as a slave.
2. Violating a commandment.
4. Man of great strength.
6. Biblical prophet whose name means “Yahweh is my God.”
8. Degree, for short.
9. Is a dealer in.
12. Dirt and water.
15. Water transport in the Bible (two words).
17. In that place.
18. Therefore.
20. Acknowledge openly.
22. Crop in the Bible.
24. Peter’s brother and one of Jesus’ disciples.
25. Chronicles 1: “David took the crown of their king from his head, and he found it to weigh a ___ of gold.”
26. Street, for short.
28. Certain MD’s specialty.
29. Lost in wonder.
33. Mark 13: Jesus said: “Do you see these great buildings? Not one ___ will be left upon another which will not be torn down.”
35. When it flourishes, it’s harvested.
37. Possessed.

SPONSOR THIS PAGE: Help The Christian Chronicle serve our readers with Bible-themed crosswords. Contact advertising manager Tonya Patton at tonya.patton@christianchronicle.org or (405) 425-5070.
We mourn lost lives — and we celebrate those saved

The gunfire lasted just six seconds. The trauma will linger much longer.

On Dec. 29, a man entered the West Freeway Church of Christ in White Settlement, Texas, stood during the Lord’s Supper and shot to death two beloved Christians: Richard White, 67, and Anton “Tony” Wallace, 64.

If not for Jack Wilson, the church’s volunteer security team leader, many more lives undoubtedly would have been lost.

A single shot from Wilson’s gun struck the gunman, killing him and preventing further loss of life.

Texas Gov. Greg Abbott rightly praised Wilson’s heroism, presenting him with the Governor’s Medal of Courage.

“When faced with an evil that few of us will ever comprehend, Jack Wilson responded with strength, bravery, and with love for those in the church that day,” Abbott said at a special ceremony in Austin.

Even as we mourn White and Wallace, we thank God for Wilson’s courage and quick action that stopped the bloodshed.

We recognize that sincere Bible believers can come to different conclusions on the appropriateness — or not — of guns at church. We understand that our nation must grapple with important questions related to mental health issues and keeping firearms out of the hands of criminals.

There’ll be an appropriate time to address such concerns. For the moment, we’d urge our fellow Christians to focus on lifting up the victims’ grieving congregation and loved ones in prayer.

Drinking column sparks feedback

I do not believe social drinking is a sin or salvation issue (“To drink or not to drink? Christians differ on question,” Inside Story, January).

After we had children, we visited friends where they always had a cold beer. There are many alcohols on both sides of our families. One day on the way to visit, I suddenly realized what we were doing and asked my husband to stop for a minute.

We made a vow to God and our children right then that we would never take another drink. That was 60 years ago. We taught our children about alcohols and the dangers, and they passed the lesson on.

Gloria Ledbetter | High Springs, Fla.

I am rather shocked at the thinking of some of my brethren. I agree with Cecil May, who said, “Be a teetotaler.”

On the other hand, I am not surprised at anything anymore. I would recommend the book “Bible Wines” by William Patton published in 1871. On page 47 is information about the Greek word translated wine in English. I believe it to be a generic term that can be grape juice or fermented. I do not believe my Lord turned water into an intoxicating drink.

Bayard Huff | Roundhill, Ky.

I agree with 99 percent of what brother Ross wrote. I used to be a “teetotaler” until about 16 years ago, when I had a small stroke. I have always been a reader of the Bible (avid) and medical literature.

After I had my minor stroke, I was reading in a medical journal written by a top-class medical doctor who wrote, “If you are feeling the symptoms of a stroke taking place, immediately get a cup of hot black coffee. Put a teaspoon of whiskey or brandy in it and a teaspoon of pure cane sugar (or any sugar handy). Drink it right away.”

I have tried it. It’s like the wizard’s magic potion.

Incidentally, I’m 90 years old. I still weightlift three times a week. I imbibe whisky three times per week. It opens up the lungs and respiratory system like the Roto-Rooter does water pipes.

Jack Stevenson | Tempe, Ariz.

Drinking is very common in the church today. This is sad. It doesn’t make us much different than the world. As a mother and wife who lived with an alcoholic the first 14 years of marriage then began to drink once her husband became sober, I can truly say that nothing good comes from drinking.

As we grow closer to God and Christ, earthly wants and desires should become easier to set aside. Drinking is an earthly desire. Yes, Jesus turned the water into wine at the beginning of his ministry. It amazes me how many Christ-followers use this as an example or justification to drink.

He was invited to a wedding with his disciples. It doesn’t mention why he did it. It didn’t say he condemned it. As we go deeper into the New Testament, we are reminded to be sober-minded, holy and pure — and to think about what is noble and admirable.

Patricia A. Sayen | Arlington, Texas
Chuches of Christ enjoyed a mutually beneficial relationship with colleges and universities associated with the fellowship during the 20th century. A substantial number of alumni planted and worked with congregations all over the country and throughout the world.

Conversely, these institutions enjoyed a relationship with Churches of Christ. Church leaders, members and alumni encouraged young people to go to a college or university associated with Churches of Christ (especially if it were their alma mater). This influence was a powerful force in the lives of many young people who made their college choices based upon such recommendations.

But the story has changed since the turn of the 21st century. Significantly declining numbers of students from Churches of Christ attend and graduate from these institutions. That suggests that the mutually beneficial relationship has substantively diminished from what it once was.

For the past eight years I have conducted research on the topic of enrollment trends in Church of Christ-associated colleges and universities, as well as trends among the fellowship’s congregations and the U.S. population. I report annually on this topic to the presidents of these institutions.

One of the indicators I measure is the number of freshman or FTIACs (first time in any college) students from Churches of Christ. Since the turn of the century, the number of FTIACs from Churches of Christ has declined nearly 58 percent at colleges and universities associated with the fellowship.

During this period, most of the associated institutions have been able to maintain their overall enrollments. However, all of them have declined in the actual number of enrollees from Churches of Christ, with most experiencing double-digit percentage declines.

Conversely, as is true with membership in churches of any kind in the U.S. during the past 20 years, Churches of Christ have experienced declines in both congregational and population numbers. The number of congregations has fallen by 1,103, or 8.5 percent, during the 19-year interval. During the same time period the number of adherents in Churches of Christ (baptized believers plus their families) has declined by 215,946, or 13.12 percent.

The data reveal a story of substantial disruption of the cycle of mutual benefit between Churches of Christ and the associated institutions, and this arguably creates sustainability questions.

Do our churches still benefit from our universities?
challenges for both. This is especially true given the significant environmental challenges they each face.

A challenge facing the church, according to national research, is that membership in a church of any kind has declined significantly — from 70 percent of U.S. citizens in 1998 to only 50 percent in 2018.

A key factor of the decline is the increase in the population who claim no religious affiliation, also known as “nones.” This demographic has more than doubled, from 8 percent in 1998 to 19 percent in 2018.

Age appears to be a major factor when it comes to affiliation with religion. Older generations are much more likely than younger generations to be members of churches. However, substantial declines are occurring across all age groups.

Colleges and universities associated with Churches of Christ are facing a very different higher education environment from what they did when they were first established — more than a century ago, in some cases. The expectations of consumers of higher education have changed dramatically.

To meet those changing expectations, educational leaders and their institutions must adapt, which is difficult for institutions that have inherited a century-plus-old model of Christian higher education that has historically held itself as the standard to be adhered to and assessed by. This model is kept active by history, heritage and ideology as well as other powerful constituents from both on and off campus, none of which accept change easily.

These dynamics leave me reflecting upon the future of both the church and the associated institutions — and what the next century holds for both. I’m frequently left wondering whether it is possible for rediscovery and rebuilding of the mutual benefit between churches and universities.

Subsequently, I’m concerned about how the mission to proclaim Christ to our communities has been weakened.

My experiences have shown me that God can use our congregations and institutions for his purposes for as long as they exist. However, the evidence is overwhelming that they are all temporary.

Although Christ pleads with us to be unified in his name and Spirit, he has never promised to maintain our organizations for us, and we need to dismiss any notion that our Christian faith is tied to their continued existence. The cause of Christ will continue on with or without us.

Having said that, I believe that God has called us to use our every resource to his glory, and history reveals how God can use the relationship between the church and associated institutions to serve his purposes with impressive outcomes.

It is up to us to determine whether or not our organizations and our relationships will continue, and whether or not we will continue to be useful to God in this way.

TRACE HEBERT is director of the Doctor of Education program and associate dean of the College of Education at Lipscomb University in Nashville, Tenn. He has served at four colleges and universities associated with Churches of Christ and graduated from a fifth. He has been a member of Churches of Christ for more than 40 years in seven states. He is an elder of the Fourth Avenue Church of Christ in Franklin, Tenn.

Should we read the Bible as a legal brief or as an invitation to live in God’s story?

While I like travel shows of places I haven’t been, I especially love the episodes that focus on the places I have seen.

For me, reading John Mark Hicks’ “Searching for the Pattern: My Journey in Interpreting the Bible” was like the latter. In many ways, the book parallels my own journey of discovering what the Bible is (and is not) and what it means to be “a people of the book.”

I remember entering classes at Harding University in the mid-1970s, eager to study the Bible in the original languages. Both in my upbringing in Missouri and my university years, there was a quest to help the church conform to what we thought was a blueprint in Scripture. It was a heady process — wading through the commands, examples and necessary inferences of Scripture to reproduce the New Testament church. I brimmed with confidence and certainty.

But for Hicks, and for many of us, there were cracks in the wall of certainty.

First, we learned there were other groups who claimed to be “Back to the Bible” people. Apparently, that wasn’t unique. And it turned out, we didn’t have the copyright on “the Bible says it, I believe it, that settles it.”

Second, we came to realize that our approach to reading Scripture was naïve. We couldn’t just scientifically read Scripture and then put it into practice. The Bible had to be — of course — interpreted. And to many honest Christ-followers, some of our rules for discerning the blueprint just didn’t make sense.

I remember hearing sermons against humming and against clapping during the assembly. We dared not question that at the time because we were following our rules of command, example and necessary inference. We thought we were consistently being silent where the Bible is silent and speaking where the Bible speaks.

Largely through a careful reading of how authors of biblical books read Scripture themselves, Hicks learned to read from a different perspective. “Over the years,” he writes, “I have slowly shifted from reading Scripture as a legal brief designed to provide a specific blueprint for organizing a church to reading Scripture as a story into which we are invited to participate in the mission of God by imitating God.”

I love the perspective from which Hicks writes. He says in the beginning, “I hope you will hear my adoration for God, my respect for Scripture, and my love for the church in these pages.” And one can’t help but hear just that. This isn’t a book condemning others. Rather, it builds on the truths that were passed along to him in full appreciation of their lives.

I love the way he illustrates the importance of moving from an interpretive method that is obsessed with reproducing a blueprint to one that is focused on the trinitarian love and work of God. Hicks teaches us to think theologically with the story of God’s work through Jesus by the power of the Spirit at the center. He guides us to a faith where the ultimate goal is to be transformed into the image of Christ rather than to master a book. (I suggest buying the book just for the few pages about baptism in the appendix alone.)

I highly recommend “Searching for the Pattern” for leadership teams, adult classes and small groups. It’s also great for personal reading. As issues keep popping up in our churches, often bringing division, it is helpful to pull back and ask larger questions about what the Bible is and how we are to be guided by it.

I look forward to more from Hicks. Specifically, I’d like to see him flesh out more fully what he practices and teaches about reading Scripture faithfully in community through discernment. I hope he’ll provide us with more valuable examples of what reading scripture with the Gospel at the center of the interpretive process looks like.

MIKE COPE preached for 35 years for Churches of Christ in North Carolina, Arkansas and Texas. He serves as director of ministry outreach for Pepperdine University in Malibu, Calif., and directs Harbor, the Pepperdine Bible Lectures.
EXPLORATIONS IN CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY


In this scholarly yet accessible book, Ed Gallagher helps the church understand the importance of the book of Exodus for Christian theology. Gallagher’s casual and clear writing style guides readers through thoughtful explorations of such topics as the revelation of God’s name to Moses, the hardening of Pharaoh’s heart, the gift of manna, Israel’s reception of the Torah, and the ark of the covenant. Each of the thirteen chapters begins with a passage in Exodus that features prominently in the New Testament and traces the reception of that passage in ancient Judaism and in Christianity. Frequent interaction with Philo, Josephus, the Dead Sea Scrolls, patristic literature, and later Christian authors such as John Calvin give depth to these chapters not often found in material designed for Bible classes and individual study. As Gallagher says in the preface, “The book of Exodus is foundational for Christian theology.” His helpful book amply demonstrates that claim in a way that all Christians can appreciate.

“Ed Gallagher traces important theological themes from the book of Exodus to reveal how they relate prominently to teachings developed by New Testament writers. These well-known but difficult themes are often misunderstood by many in our Restoration heritage. Gallagher provides clarity and fresh insight into their meaning and reflects on their implications for Christians today. This is a delightful and informative read. The church needs more of these kinds of resources written by scholars like Gallagher.”

—Dave Bland, Harding School of Theology

Seventy-Fifth Anniversary

**Why I Am A Member of the Church of Christ**

by Leroy Brownlow

For 75 years, *Why I Am A Member of the Church of Christ* has attempted to explain what we believed and why we believe it.

It is Biblical and as timeless and true as ever. The church has never been perfect and never will be. But may God help us, with grace and humility, to share our Biblical understanding with a new generation.

Softcover $4.99 Hardcover $9.99

Order from: Brownlow Publishing Company
1.800.433.7610

**DO THE DIVORCED AND REMARRIED HAVE A PLACE IN GOD’S KINGDOM? YOUR CHURCH MAY SAY NO, BUT JESUS SAYS YES!**

**DIVORCED?**

Don’t let misinformed preachers burden you with guilt and deprive you of opportunities to serve. Remarriage is possible.

“Hopefully, this book will serve as a guide… hopefully [to] stop teaching the ‘sacred cow’ philosophy that many have adopted out of fear of being branded a liberal or false teacher. Thank you, brother!”

—J. Wiggins

“This is the best book ever written on the issue…”

—Charles Hodge, author, *On the Banks of Onion Creek*

Available at Christian Bookstores and Amazon.com • 159 pages

Hardcover $20.95 • Paperback $13.50 • Kindle e-book $8.95

Discounts at:

www.weldonlangfield.com
**Iranians find a Pearl of Great Price**

**ATHENS, Greece**

Some of the strongest Christians I know are Iranian.

I’ve been thinking about them a lot in the midst of growing tensions between our two countries. As I watch news of missile attacks, a downed airliner, protests and grim prognostications, I remember Miriam, her bronze fingers with chipped nail polish tracing over the words of a Bible verse in Farsi, right to left (just like Hebrew). She had highlighted the words in yellow and festooned them with little hearts and stars. “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it.”

I met Miriam during a visit to Athens in 2018. She was one of countless refugees from the Middle East, and she was part of a Bible study conducted by Christians working with Mission Resource Network’s MedRim initiative.

We sat on floor cushions around a low, Asian-style table in a room with bamboo-lined walls. A Korean Christian owned the place and was letting the refugees live there.

Only one of the Iranians in the Bible study knew much English. He wasn’t feeling well, but he translated nonetheless — and still managed to be a comedian. When the teacher debated whether or not to use a small nail to hang up a dry-erase board, he yelled, “It’s OK! If we make hole, we just use toothpaste” to cover it.

(’m so glad the language of apartment rental hacks is universal.)

The study centered on the difference between being saved and being a disciple. It was slow going. These folks were brand new in their faith. But the teacher was patient, even when our translator had to leave.

Miriam was adamant about sharing her story with me, and she wasn’t going to let language be a barrier. She pulled out her phone (yes, all refugees have phones) and typed text messages into a translation program.

In Athens, Miriam pores over the words of Matthew 13:45-46 in Farsi.

From the broken English in her texts, I gathered that she had encountered an American mission team soon after her arrival in Greece. She studied the Bible with them, but then they left. She prayed and prayed to God for some sort of sign that what she had learned from them was truth.

A few weeks later she got a letter from the missionaries with the story of the Pearl of Great Price and an oyster shell necklace bearing a tiny pearl. She ran to her room to get them both. I had to see them. The letter was folded, wrinkled and worn. At the end, it said, “All our people in the U.S. prayed for you.”

Miriam was back on her phone, typing at an almost frantic pace.

When she got the letter and the necklace, “I cried,” she wrote, “because I had asked God for this.” That’s just one of countless stories of faith I’ve encountered among our Iranian brothers and sisters in Europe. Even in the refugee camps, many have endured persecution for their newfound faith. They need our encouragement. They need discipling.

And we need to learn from them. Please join me in praying for the budding faith among the Iranians in Europe and those still living in Iran. I think God’s doing something amazing among them, and I won’t be surprised if someday soon the epicenter of our faith shifts back to the Middle East.

Sound impossible? I can show you a Bible verse or two that say otherwise — in English and in Farsi.

**ERIK TRYGGESTAD** is president and CEO of The Christian Chronicle. Contact erik@christianchronicle.org. Find more stories about refugees and learn how to help them at christianchronicle.org.
CALENDAR

Feb. 2-6  Freed-Hardeman Bible Lectureship. Henderson, Tenn. Contact Kristi Burke at (731) 608-6457. Email lectureship@fhu.edu. See fhu.edu/lectureship.
March 4  Luncheon Honoring Dr. Cecil May. University Church of Christ. Montgomery, Ala. Email joey@heraldoftruth.org.
March 28  Prison Ministry Workshop. Fort Gibson Church of Christ. Fort Gibson, Okla. (918) 478-2222. Email henry@henrypetree.com.

FULL CALENDAR: www.christianchronicle.org. To include your event for $25, contact tonya.patton@christianchronicle.org.

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

APTS & TOWNHOMES
For Sale - Searcy, Ark.
Walk to Harding University!
Excellent Financing Options
Tremendous Opportunity
Text/Call 501-281-2000 parkavehomes@gmail.com

Family and Community Outreach Minister
The Dewey church located in NE Oklahoma, 50 miles north of Tulsa, is seeking a full-time family and community outreach minister. The role involves working with our families to plan youth and intergenerational activities. Additionally, the position involves planning community outreach activities. Please respond via email to:

office@deweycoc.org
(918) 534-2782
PO Box 340 Dewey, OK 74029

CARETAKERS NEEDED
Roanoke Church of Christ, a congregation of approximately 30, seeks a minister for preaching, teaching, and caring for church family and neighbors. Please send resume and link to recent sermon, lesson, or teaching to:

Minister Wanted - Roanoke, Va.
Steering Committee, c/o Mike Branch
mmbranch@roanokechurchofchrist.com

To: 955-77
Chronicle
Do you want to be one of the first to know when it launches?
Do you want to receive breaking news updates?
Text the word “Chronicle” to the number 95577 to receive updates on its availability.

Something NEW is coming!
The Christian Chronicle is getting an app.
INSIDE

CALENDAR...........31 INTERNATIONAL .... 15
CROSSWORD ...... 28 NATIONAL...........5
CURRENTS.........17 PARTNERS ..........23
DIALOGUE........21 PEOPLE..............24
INSIDE STORY......3 REVIEWS............32
INSIGHT...........34 VIEWS................30

Experience Ministry

In the Class
And in the Field

Heritage Christian University
50 years of real-world ministry

www.hcu.edu

Share the Good News with

Bibles for Millions

...an effort to put one million
WBS Study Bibles into the hands of seekers.
You and your congregation can be 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. worldbibleschool.net/give

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

$5 each up to 99
PLUS SHIPPING
$4.25 for 100 to 499
$3.50 for 500 or more
(For special orders, call 877-393-0211.)