



Worship in PJs or pews?

TWO YEARS INTO the pandemic, church leaders reflect on the blessings — and drawbacks — of livestreaming.

BY **BOBBY ROSS JR.** | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

Have some Christians gotten a little too comfortable worshipping at home in their pajamas?

Trey Morgan asks that half-serious question about livestreamed services.

“You honestly have to wonder,” said Morgan, senior minister for the Childress Church of Christ, a thriving Texas congregation halfway between Amarillo and Wichita Falls.

When COVID-19 prompted the cancellation of in-person assemblies in March 2020, countless Churches of Christ turned to internet platforms such as Facebook, YouTube and Zoom to connect and encourage members.

Some congregations made the “rip and sip” communion cup — a small wafer contained atop a tiny cup of grape juice — available for members to pick up. Other Christians bought juice and prepared their own unleavened bread.

Two years later, most congregations have reopened their buildings, but overall attendance remains down from previous levels — often by as much as one-third to one-half, a *Christian Chronicle* survey found.

While some leaders worry about Christians forsaking physical gatherings, a majority of those surveyed said they see benefits to maintaining virtual options — especially for the immunocompromised, shut-ins and traveling members.

“My husband and I are elderly and sickly, so we really appreciate being able to participate in worship with our congregation via YouTube,” said Bettye Garrett, a member of the Rolling Hills Church of Christ in Mt. Sterling, Ky. “Other wise, we would miss

See **LIVESTREAM**, Page 10



AUDREY JACKSON

Health care comes home in Honduras

In the village of La Campana, Honduras, Jose Pagoada, a health promoter with Predisan medical mission, takes notes during a checkup at the home of Emerita Duarte, a member of the Indigenous Pech people. On the wall are the words “Dios es amor” (“God is love”). Supporters of Predisan, a nonprofit with roots in Churches of Christ, once feared that the Honduran government would take over their facilities. Instead, Predisan now serves as primary care for underserved communities.

SEE **CURRENTS**, Page 19

Doing good in a divided world: Freed-Hardeman lectures call for compassion

BY **ERIK TRYGGESTAD** | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

HENDERSON, Tenn.

As story after story of White law enforcement officers killing Blacks flashed across screens in the midst of a global pandemic, “society gave me a pass,” TJ Kirk said.

“I didn’t have to love police,” said Kirk, who is Black and preaches for the Jacks Creek Church of Christ in Tennessee. Then “it happened right here in our town.”

During an October 2020 standoff

with a suspected car thief in nearby McNairy County, a White female officer shot and killed a Black man, echoing the headlines Kirk had seen far too many times.

“The difference is, I knew the officer,” said Kirk, who, in addition to preaching, was principal for Chester County Middle School in Henderson. The officer had “walked my school

hallways” to keep students safe. “I knew her. I loved her. And she had even trusted me to educate her babies.”

Compassion — shown even when society says it’s OK not to — was the theme of the 86th annual Bible lectureship at Freed-Hardeman University. Kirk and Christians from across the nation spoke to more than 2,000 registered attendees on campus and an additional 530 who watched online.

Kirk chose not to say anything
See **FHU**, Page 24



Kirk

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'This is not God's first pandemic'

AUSTIN, Texas

It's a stressful time to be a church leader.

From racial strife to rising inflation to pandemic culture wars, various factors conspire to divide congregations.

"It's never been easy to be a leader in the church," said Keith Stanglin, director of the Austin-based Center for Christian

Inside Story



Bobby Ross Jr.

Studies. "I think it's just become so much harder."

The center, which Stanglin leads along with associate director Todd Hall, organized a recent seminar hosted by the Brentwood Oaks Church of Christ.

"Leading the Church in Tumultuous Times" was the theme of the event, which Stanglin said aimed to provide encouragement and strategies for leaders.

Jeremie Beller, *The Christian Chronicle's* opinions editor and congregational minister for the Wilshire Church of Christ in Oklahoma City, was one of the three featured speakers. I hitched a ride with him and enjoyed catching up on his life and ministry on the 800-mile round trip.

The other speakers were Jim Martin, vice president of Harding School of Theology in Memphis, Tenn., and Carson Reed, executive

See AUSTIN, Page 4

Feeding children in Florida

A LONE CHURCH OF CHRIST congregation makes a difference for kids in Franklin County.

BY AUDREY JACKSON | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me."

In Franklin County, Fla., the Eastpoint Church of Christ doesn't even have to ask. Children — ages 3 to 11 — flock to the church van driven by Jenny Johnson each Sunday.

First, she collects children in the town of Eastpoint. Then she drives 20 minutes to Apalachicola. It normally takes two trips to transport all the children to the church building. Before the Pine Hill Church of Christ in Waterloo, Ala., donated the van, Johnson made multiple trips by car.

One child's mother told a church leader she has to watch her young son closely any time he sees a white van — not just the one Johnson drives.

"He runs toward it thinking he's going to get to go to Sunday school," said Gary Hall, the Eastpoint church's adult class minister.

See FLORIDA, Page 12



PHOTO PROVIDED BY MIKE JOHNSON

The Eastpoint Church of Christ congregation meets on a Sunday morning. The church, which has a regular attendance of 25 to 30, feeds children in the community.

The truth of Brown v. Board

PLAINTIFF'S DAUGHTER sets the record straight on landmark desegregation case.

BY BOBBY ROSS JR. | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

OKLAHOMA CITY

You may think you know the story of Oliver Brown, the Black father in Topeka, Kan., who was the lead plaintiff in the landmark 1954 case *Brown v. Board of Education*.

You probably don't.

Nearly seven decades ago, the welder-turned-preacher's name was etched in history when the U.S. Supreme Court unanimously struck down the "separate but equal" doctrine. In the *Brown v. Board* decision, justices ruled state-imposed segregated schools were "inherently unequal" and must be abolished.

But much of what is reported about



JUDSON COPELAND

Cheryl Brown Henderson shares her story at Oklahoma Christian University.

the lead plaintiff and his family is untrue, Cheryl Brown Henderson — the youngest of the late pastor's three daughters — said Feb. 7 at Oklahoma

Christian University.

"Where *Brown v. Board* is concerned, the internet is not your friend," Henderson said. "We've discovered that online there are all these stories about *Brown* that don't even resemble the truth."

The founding president of the Brown Foundation for Educational Equity, Excellence and Research shared behind-the-scenes details about her family during Oklahoma Christian's ninth annual History Speaks event.

"On one of the (web)sites, it said that Oliver Brown came home from World War II incensed about fighting for freedom abroad and coming back and experiencing racial segregation," Henderson

See HISTORY, Page 26



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BOBBY ROSS JR.

Keith Stanglin questions panelists Jeremie Beller, Carson Reed and Jim Martin.

AUSTIN: Tips for leaders in a stressful time

FROM PAGE 3

director of the Siburt Institute for Church Ministry at Abilene Christian University in Texas.

About 50 ministers, elders, deacons and Bible class teachers from all over Central Texas attended the seminar.

I enjoyed meeting several elders of the Brentwood Oaks church, a healthy congregation that oversees a thriving K-12 Christian school on its campus.

All three speakers offered helpful insight.

Two years ago, COVID-19 disrupted life as we had known it, but Reed stressed that God was not caught by surprise.

“We’ve heard the word ‘unprecedented’ an unprecedented number of times,” Reed quipped.

But he noted, “This is not God’s first pandemic.”

God has been there, done that. He’s got the whole world — and its future — in his hands.

“This can feel like a time of defeat where we’re losing,” Martin said in his presentation.

Overall church attendance is down. Many ministers are burned out and joining “The Great Resignation.” A lot of members seem more devoted to their political party than their home congregation.

What’s a leader to do?

Practicing spiritual disciplines — such as prayer, Bible reading,

silence and journaling — can be helpful, Martin said.

Among his other advice:

- **Return to your central purpose and mission** (“Why am I serving in this capacity? Am I a minister because nobody else was hiring or because I believe I was called by God?”)

- **Acknowledge the trauma** (“You don’t want to be flippant about somebody else’s pain. ... A flippant comment about COVID may not be funny to someone who lost a loved one.”)

- **Look for what God might be doing** (“I can bemoan the fact life isn’t the way it was or ask, ‘Lord, what are you trying to do right now in my life, in my church?’”)

- **Learn to rest** (“Frazzled people who are exhausted are not going to do much good.”)

Check out Martin’s full talk and a panel discussion with all three speakers on the center’s website at christian-studies.org.

At my request, Beller adapted part of his presentation into a Views column (“Preaching to be heard: Why it matters”). Find it on page 32.

In this stressful time, keep the faith, my friends. Stay focused on the Lord. I’m praying for you.

BOBBY ROSS JR. is editor-in-chief of *The Christian Chronicle*. Reach him at bobby@christianchronicle.org. Follow him on Twitter at [@bobbyross](https://twitter.com/bobbyross).

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PHOTO PROVIDED BY JOEL CRIDER

Kelly Bilger works on the construction of a tiny home for tornado victims.



BRIAN MCCUTCHEN

Brian McCutchen, right, takes a photo with an individual after buying his gas.

Meeting needs, one tank at a time

CHURCHES OF CHRIST help communities across the nation with rising costs of living.

BY AUDREY JACKSON | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

Amid a rising inflation rate and housing shortages across the United States, some Churches of Christ have turned ministry into practicality.

This is the case with Brian McCutchen, minister for the Shiloh Church of Christ in Hazel Green, Ala. He recently began waiting outside service stations with the sole goal of filling up neighbors' gas tanks and praying for the community.

The outreach is part of the Shiloh church's 2022 theme, "Reaching Out," in which members individually contribute to the community ministry outside of the church's budget.

"The first part is to fill up people's gas, partly because the economy is crazy, inflation is high, and gas is extremely expensive," McCutchen said as the nation's inflation rate recently hit 7.5 percent, the fastest rise in 40 years. "I thought this would be a good way to help people who are just struggling to get by."

Despite being a small congregation — averaging 85 members post-COVID — the church's goal is to

pay for \$1,000 worth of gas. Then members plan to randomly pay for individuals' groceries. The support has been enthusiastic, McCutchen said, mentioning that members donated \$300 during one Bible class.

"Being spontaneous in ministry is more rewarding than sitting there in a room strategizing how we're going to reach the community," McCutchen said. "I think that when we just simply have compassion to reach the community, and cost is a necessity but you don't make it the priority, then — somehow — God blesses it, and we're able to do more than we ever thought possible."

Spontaneous giving is nothing new to the Lamar Avenue Church of Christ in Paris, Texas. For over 20 years, the Lamar church's benevolence program has met community needs in whatever form they take — be it paying for rent, utility bills or food.

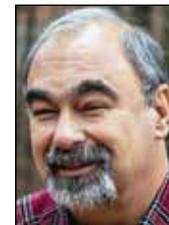
These needs have increased about 10 percent since 2020, said James Hanley, who helps with the benevolence ministry.

"People seek us out," Hanley said. "We probably have an average of

three or four people per day."

The benevolence program relies on the church's budget, which fluctuates based on weekly contributions, Hanley said, but averages around \$1,800 per month.

The only criteria is that the Lamar Avenue church's assistance will meet an individual's need and ensure that a service — like utilities or housing — will remain available. Church members connect people



Hanley

seeking short-term solutions, like overnight housing in a hotel, with organizations that are better equipped to financially handle recurrent costs.

However, about 500 miles away in Mayfield, Ky., Churches of Christ are meeting the need for short-term housing after a tornado devastated their community in December.

The Seven Oaks Church of Christ, Northside Church of Christ and Bread of Life Humanitarian Effort — a nonprofit associated with Churches of Christ — recently put aside

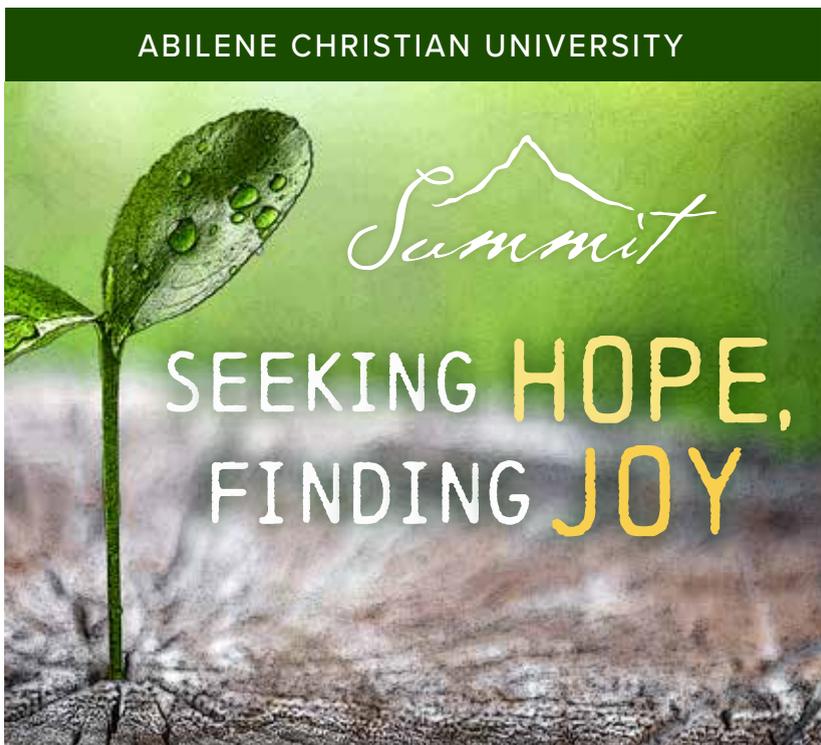
donations to build 30 tiny homes for displaced residents. Each home will be about 500 square feet, with a fully equipped kitchen, corner bathroom and two bedrooms.

The goal is to provide short-term housing for families until they are able to rent or build new accommodations, said Joel Crider, a Seven Oaks church elder.

A committee formed by the Seven Oaks Church of Christ, Northside Church of Christ, Lee Street Church of Christ and Iglesia de Cristo — the latter congregations representing the Black and Latino communities in Mayfield — will review housing applicants recommended by the school systems and individuals in the community once the homes are completed.

"The biggest hurdle has been location," Crider said. "We want it to be convenient for the families who have kids or have work because, with gas going over \$3 a gallon, they're having to drive a long way to get to a job that may not really pay enough to drive all the way there."

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PHOTO PROVIDED BY STEPHANIE SPEAR

Church hosts homeless during cold months

Volunteers with the Woodson Chapel Church of Christ make meals for a warming shelter organized by Room in the Inn, a nonprofit that Churches of Christ often partner with to provide shelter and food for homeless men. The Nashville, Tenn., church worked as a warming center with the nonprofit from December to February. "It's an outreach program to the homeless that allows individuals to work towards getting off the street," said Frank Peeler, who co-deacons the ministry with Russell Crouch.

Ministry beyond closed doors

BY CALVIN COCKRELL | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

The East Frayser Church of Christ in north Memphis, Tenn., shut its doors at the end of 2021. For Donald and Ann Green, it marked the end of more than 60 years of ministry in various forms with the congregation. But to them, the East Frayser church was never about a building, anyway.

The Greens had seen the congregation grow from the time they joined in 1960, just two years after its inception, to nearly 1,000 members in a massive building.

Then they saw the congregation shrink as members moved out of the inner city and began attending some of the congregations that sprang up around the Memphis area — many of which the Greens and the East Frayser church helped plant.

As the numbers for East Frayser dwindled, the church sold its building and began to share space with a Presbyterian church across the street. Then it met in a strip mall.

Meanwhile, East Frayser used the money from the building sale to support the work of the church around the world. Daniel Green, 45, one of Donald and Ann's three children, told *The Christian Chronicle* the congregation was supporting 13 mission works when it closed — while having only a couple dozen members.

The Greens were part of a lot of those missions, too. They were involved in decades of mission work in Southeast Asia, Ukraine, Hungary and most recently — about four years ago — in Southeast Africa.

Though Donald, now 85, was East Frayser's preaching minister for the last 20 years, it was sharing the Gospel outside the building that was most important to him.

"Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature — that's not just something we teach in the Church of Christ," he said. "It's something we do personally because we're commanded to do it."

Read the full story at christianchronicle.org/sixdecades.



PHOTO PROVIDED BY DANIEL GREEN

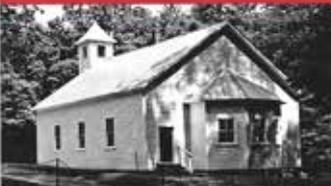
The Greens in 1963.

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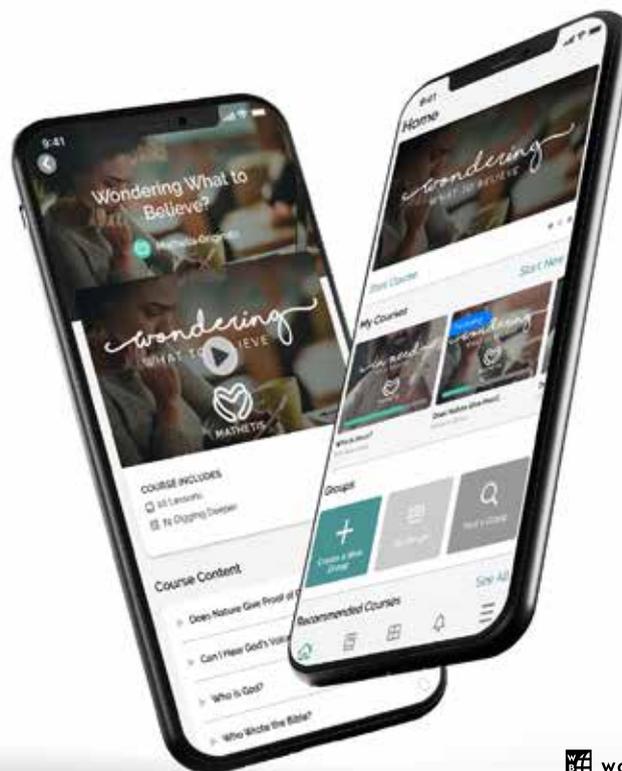
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WORLD BIBLE SCHOOL

LIVESTREAM: What is the future of online church?

FROM PAGE 1

worship most of the time,” she added. “Personally, it will never replace in-person worship. I especially miss singing.”

Morgan, the Texas preacher, describes livestreaming as an excellent tool for outreach, in addition to its benefits to members.

At the Childress church, average attendance has declined just slightly since the coronavirus became a concern. It’s now about 350, down from 375, Morgan said.

“We’ve added several new families to our church in the past year who began watching online,” he said. “We will continue to livestream for the foreseeable future.”

Still, the minister worries about members who have stayed away for reasons other than health concerns.

“I’m afraid at times we may make it too easy for people to skip fellowship and just sit at home if they don’t want to get up and around,” Morgan said. “Church and people were created for fellowship. While online worship is convenient and necessary, it can also be tempting when it comes to being lazy.”

ONE CHURCH’S EXPERIENCE

Elsewhere in the Lone Star State, online services for the Tolar Church of Christ, about 45 miles southwest of Fort Worth, began with elder Wes Ives and his wife, Lisa.

“The first few months we actually filmed from a tripod and my iPhone,” said Lisa Ives, one of about 250 readers who responded to the *Chronicle’s* online survey. “Now we



PHOTO PROVIDED BY LISA IVES

Elder Wes Ives and his wife, Lisa, attend the Tolar Church of Christ.



SHUTTERSTOCK PHOTO

Churches of Christ are weighing the pros and cons of offering online worship options.

have a great system on our computers at the building that works well for our small congregation.”

Ives said her family usually chooses to attend church in person. After all, her husband typically leads worship.

At the same time, Wes Ives is a firefighter and sometimes must work on the Lord’s Day.

“So it has been wonderful for him to be able to worship via livestream when he is on Sunday shift at the fire station,” his wife said.

“We also travel and camp with a group of church family,” she added. “In addition to having church together at the campsites, we can also watch the livestream of our home congregation to worship together.”

Ives said her parents, Buck and Roberta Chisolm, survived COVID-19 but developed major complications and “are basically homebound now.”

“It has been wonderful to have them be able to worship from home and still feel connected and safe,” she said. “It makes missing the fellowship a bit more bearable.”

Since returning to in-person worship, the Tolar church has a typical attendance of 90, she said. That’s down from 150 before the pandemic.

Ives said she’s encouraged by those watching online “who might not have

ever come to an in-person service.”

But like Morgan, she misses fellow Christians who haven’t returned.

“How can we encourage folks to fill the pews as well?” Ives said.

“It can be disheartening to see members who won’t come in person but who are willing to go to work in person, attend social/sporting events and visit other public places.

“But even those concerns and questions,” she added, “shouldn’t hinder us from continuing to use technology to ‘go into all the world and preach.’”

‘WHEN CHRISTIANS ASSEMBLE’

Even before COVID-19, overall church attendance was declining, noted Jeff Lovitt, minister for the Morganton Church of Christ in North Carolina.

The pandemic simply accelerated that trend, Lovitt said.

“Livestreaming can have the

negative effect of causing people to be separated from the church and its ministries, thinking that ‘watching’ from the comfort of their homes is enough,” he said. “For these people, this is disturbing. Church is supposed to be



Lovitt

when Christians assemble.

“But,” he added, “if it can be used as an outreach for the unchurched, I think that livestreaming has value.”

Moreover, online worship blesses members who are chronically ill or can’t drive at night, said Kathleen Trigg, a member of the Wesley Chapel Church of Christ in Florida.



Trigg

“We thank the Lord for the technological advances that let us gather virtually when it isn’t safe to be face to face,” Trigg said. “But the platform we use doesn’t work well with singing, and you can’t hug each other through a screen.

“We are all relieved and thrilled when we can gather again, even if masked and distanced,” she added. “Virtual worship is better than isolation, but it cannot compare with being physically together to worship God.”

For Carla Dean Thompson, a missionary to Kenya who teaches the Bible to women and trains leaders to work with children, livestreaming has provided a welcome connection to supporting congregations in the U.S.

She enjoys participating in services — from afar — with the Oldham Lane Church of Christ and Southern Hills Church of Christ, both in Abilene, Texas, and the North County Church of Christ in Escondido, Calif.

“I am thankful that we have good preaching in the church I attend and work with in Nairobi,” Thompson said. “It is still good to stay connected and get teaching from the U.S.A.”

UNPLUGGING VS. PLUGGING IN

Some congregations are unsure whether they will continue livestreaming.

That’s the case for the Main Street Church of Christ in Walnut Ridge, Ark.

“I know some churches are embracing this technology and hoping it will enhance the involvement



CHRIS WOODROW

A livestreamed service is filmed at the Belton Church of Christ in Texas.

and the spreading of the Gospel,” said Rob Combs, the Main Street church’s minister. “We all need to be in prayerful consideration of what is best for the future of the church. We are concerned this could continue a decline in local church membership and involvement. Time will tell.”

Other leaders said they’d love to find ways to enhance their congregation’s internet presence.

“Online church can become consumer-driven, and I would like ideas on how to connect members relationally online,” said Joseph Neal, minister for the Magnolia Center Church of Christ in Riverside, Calif.

Some churches hope to develop more formal ministries for the “virtual congregation.”

“We believe there will always be people who are not likely to attend a physical church but who will feel like they are a part of it because they watch regularly,” said Donna Fore, finance manager for the Memorial Church of Christ in Houston. “We want to engage them and be sure their needs are being met.”

Ken Truax, an elder of the East Independence Church of Christ in the Kansas City, Mo., area, expressed a similar sentiment.

“We are concerned about how to involve all of our congregation post-shutdown, whether they worship in person or online,” Truax

said. “And we realize that we have a great opportunity to engage with those who are worshipping with us online who were not part of our congregation pre-shutdown. So we are working on strategies for both.”



Combs

Still other leaders stressed the importance of paying close attention to God’s direction.

The Bayview Church of Christ in San Francisco has met only online for nearly two years, but its minister, Rodney Stovall Jr., said the congregation hopes to resume in-person services soon.

“I believe we need to be very open-minded about why God has allowed us to go through this,” Stovall said of the



Fore



Stovall

pandemic. “We need to be quiet enough to hear him, and we need to be alert enough to see the answers.”

JOIN THE CONVERSATION: What has been your experience — or your congregation’s experience — with online church? Comment at christianchronicle.org/livestreamsurvey.



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FLORIDA: Leading a congregation full of children



PHOTOS PROVIDED BY MIKE JOHNSON

Children work on crafts during Sunday school at the Eastpoint church.

Mike and Jenny Johnson pose with the Eastpoint church sign. The couple moved to Florida in 2018 to help with the church shortly before Hurricane Michael.

Children pile into the back of Jenny Johnson's car for a ride on a Sunday morning.

FROM PAGE 3

While Jenny picks up the children — sometimes as many as 25 — her husband, Mike, the church's minister, cooks breakfast at the building. The menu features favorites such as bacon, biscuits, cinnamon rolls, sausage and fresh fruit.

Word about the services — and meals — has spread through the community via word of mouth. The children often bring along their friends and family.

For some kids, it's their first meal since school on Friday. About 19 percent of Franklin County's 12,451 residents lived below the poverty line in 2020, the U.S. Census Bureau reported, leaving children of impoverished families struggling with food insecurity.

Then the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission closed the Apalachicola oyster fishery, leaving many unemployed in an already poor community on the coast.

The Johnsons began serving breakfast and lunch on Sundays to feed hungry children.

"The people here are in a cycle because they've lost their jobs," Jenny said. "They can't oyster anymore. ... So they come to us; we have a pantry, and we have cleaning

supplies and toilet paper, anything you need for your home to eat or to take care of yourself. ... Usually we'll meet one person, and then they'll bring their friends."

After breakfast, the children join the adults in the auditorium to sing a few songs and observe the Lord's Supper before filing out for a Sunday school lesson led by Jenny.

"She's operating almost like a one-room schoolhouse, with kids from kindergarten up to maybe 10 or 12 years old, but she's got a wide range of capabilities," Hall said. "She's just tireless."

But teaching one lesson to a wide range of ages wasn't unfamiliar.

"My mother taught me how to teach class," Jenny recalled. "My father, the first time he started preaching, was with the Bevis Church of Christ in Lutts, Tenn. It was an old one-room schoolhouse and had a coal-burning stove. It was kind of like going back in time. ... She taught me how to be her helper. She taught me how to teach."

Hall and his wife help feed the children before and after the

service. They became involved with the congregation while vacationing at nearby St. George Island before eventually moving to Eastpoint to help with the ministry.

"Our mission is these children because that's who we can get to come," Hall said. "Mike and Jenny ... they've given food, diapers, baby food, beds, refrigerators, stoves, furniture, clothing. They've given every kind of support that you can give to the community. And, of course, many people say, 'Well, I'm sure coming here.' And then they don't.

"But these kids are faithful to come, and they love to come, and that's who we're really focusing on."

'WRITING A SERMON THAT NO ONE WILL HEAR'

While children now outnumber adults most Sundays, the Eastpoint church was not always so youthful — or crowded.

When Mike and Jenny Johnson arrived in 2018 to help with the congregation, there were only two elderly members. The church,

which was founded in 2005 by James Lee, a graduate of Heritage Christian University in Florence, Ala., had dwindled. Sunday services were a small affair.

"Every Sunday I would get up and tell my wife, 'Well, this may be Eleanor Rigby,'" Mike said, referring to a famous Beatles song about a community without religion. "I may be writing a sermon that no one will hear."

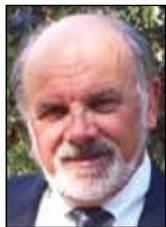
There was no one to blame for the church's low attendance. People in Franklin County just weren't interested in religion, said Hall, who had attended years before on vacation when the Eastpoint church was meeting in Lee's house.

Isolated by location, the community remained mostly untouched by outside ministries.

Wayne Barrier, a member of the Double Springs Church of Christ, the northern Alabama congregation that supports the Eastpoint church, described Franklin County as a place around 80 miles west from Panama City and nothing north but

'Our mission is these children because that's who we can get to come. Mike and Jenny ... They've given every kind of support that you can give to the community.'

Gary Hall, talking about the Johnsons ministry.



Hall

pine trees. Hall, the adult class minister, calls it the Forgotten Coast.

However, that all changed when Hurricane Michael swept through the community in October 2018, wiping out roads and destroying buildings. Eastpoint — the lone Church of Christ in the county — became the main point of contact for Churches of Christ Disaster Relief Effort and a distributor for Federal Emergency Management Agency aid.

Soon, the church became known to the community for more than Sunday morning sermons.

“They met everybody in the community,” Barrier said. “They got to know the local officials. They became really good friends with the sheriff of the county. It really raised the profile of the church.”

‘WE TOOK THEIR SPOTS’

It was during the hurricane relief efforts that the Johnsons met the Cooper family.

The family of eight had lost their home and belongings in the 2018 hurricane, and the Johnsons helped Thomas and Crystal Cooper furnish mattresses for the children’s bunk beds after they found a mobile home.

Jenny began visiting the family on Sunday mornings to take the children to church.

After about six months, Thomas and Crystal began attending themselves.

However, when the Apalachicola fishery closed in 2020, Thomas — like many men — lost his main source of income. To support their family, the couple began working on Sundays, but their children faithfully continued weekly attendance, riding along with Jenny in the morning.

The Coopers’ children became Jenny’s faithful companions every Sunday, particularly Lilly, 10, and Alexis, 11, who rode in the passenger seat.

“Lilly would sit right behind me in the middle of the seat, so she could lean forward and talk to us the whole time,” Jenny said. “And Alexis would always want to know what the Bible story was and what it’s about.

And Lilly would say, ‘Yes, and what is our craft today? Are we painting?’ She loved to paint.”

The Johnsons had just begun discussing baptism in the last few months with Alexis, Lilly and their teenage brother, Camron, when tragedy struck the Cooper family.

A fire, likely caused by a heating lamp, started around 1 a.m. on Jan. 21, burning the Coopers’ mobile home to the ground and killing the two sisters. Thomas, Crystal and two of their other children who were present at the time — Camron and Bently — escaped.

“Camron is a hero,” Crystal said. “He got us all out. He couldn’t get to the girls, but he got his little brother out of bed and made sure he got out, and then he came and got us.”

The family once again turned to the church for support.

The small Eastpoint community rallied, attending a prayer vigil led by Mike Johnson and donating what residents could — clothes, food and essential items — to the family.

The Johnsons began gathering monetary donations from numerous Churches of Christ across the nation, covering the \$14,000 in funeral and burial costs. Further donations were set aside to furnish the Coopers’ next home.

Since the fire, the couple has returned to the church with renewed interest, Hall said. Crystal especially has sought God in the tragedy. Mike Johnson said he expects to baptize her in the next few weeks.

“It’s amazing right now, especially after she’s lost her children, but it’s helped her to want to learn,” Jenny said. “‘To be a good person’ is how she put it. She wants to make it through with God.”

But for Crystal, being baptized and growing in her faith in Christ is a simple choice.

“I need to make it to where my girls are,” Crystal said. “We took their spots at the church and gotta make sure we don’t miss because they wouldn’t.”

‘It’s amazing right now, especially after she’s lost her children, but it’s helped her to want to learn. ‘To be a good person’ is how she put it. She wants to make it through with God.’

Jenny Johnson, about Crystal Cooper’s dedication to growing in her faith.



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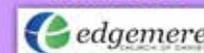
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Development Officer, Southeastern Region

Location: Nashville, Tennessee

DESCRIPTION

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APPLY ONLINE AT:

www.HopeForHaitisChildren.org/Jobs

GERMANY

WEINSBERG — “The only problem was that I could not stop crying,” said Eleni Melirrytos.



Melirrytos

After years of serving Middle Eastern refugees through the Omonia Church of Christ in Athens, Greece, Melirrytos traveled to Germany to visit families who had resettled there.

One family, living in an apartment in Weinsberg, prepared “a Syrian feast.” They have jobs, speak German and are enjoying a life of peace, Melirrytos said.

“I cried at the thought of what they had been through ... from Syria to Turkey to Greece through traffickers, through camps, in tents, in forgotten-by-time downtown Athenian apartments,” she said. “The air of that tidy, warm and loving apartment was filled with redemption.”

NIGERIA

ABAK — “The only challenge ... is having Bibles to give to the new converts,” said evangelist Monday Akpakpan. The longtime minister,



Akpakpan

who preaches, teaches and does follow-up work with World Bible School correspondence students, reported six baptisms at a recent gospel seminar, seven baptisms at another and nine more each at two other church events.

“Nothing can stop us from the work of God,” Akpakpan said.

PANAMA

PANAMA CITY — Missionary Lisa Carter traveled with a team dedicated to improving health care and education for the indigenous Embera people in this Central American nation.



Carter

“One day the group was in a migrant camp distributing soap. The next day

they were meeting with leaders in remote villages only accessible



PHOTO PROVIDED

A Grand ministry in the Bahamas

On the island of Grand Bahama, the northernmost of the 700 islands that comprise the nation of the Bahamas, Tavoro and Shameika Hanna serve the Eight Mile Rock Church of Christ. The congregation recently hosted a marriage retreat and is moving into a new building. The church plans to host a gospel seminar this spring.

by dugout canoe,” said Carter’s husband, Larry. “This was followed by beautiful conference rooms and meetings with university presidents — and then talking with the U.S. ambassador and his staff.”

The team included Tennessee State Rep. Mark White, nurse practitioner Diane Edrington from Mississippi, professors from the University of Tennessee and leaders of Embera villages.

The Carters work with Embera Christians. Larry Carter said, “Hopefully, these initial meetings will lead to educational scholarships, medical clinics and a generation of Embera people who are better prepared to meet the needs of their own people — and more open doors for the gospel.”

PHILIPPINES

CEBU CITY — Churches of Christ and relief ministries associated with the fellowship continue clean-up, relief and rebuilding efforts in the

wake of Typhoon Rai, which swept through 11 of the Philippines’ 17 provinces in December. The damage affected nearly 10 million people. Two months after the typhoon, about 144,000 Filipinos are still displaced, the United Nations reports.

The storm postponed the start of the semester at Cebu Bible College, said director Mark VanDyke. “We will be sending students out each weekend to help with the recovery,” he said, “working with churches in the communities that have been impacted by the typhoon.”



PHOTO PROVIDED BY CEBU BIBLE COLLEGE

Filipino Christians clean up after Rai, a Category 5-equivalent super typhoon.

SPOTLIGHT

It’s 3 a.m. — time to pray

CÚCUTA, Colombia — “On my bed, I remember you; I think of you through the watches of the night”

Those words from Psalm 63 inspire Ronald and Monica Sabino to set their alarms for 3 a.m. every morning for a time of prayer.

The couple serves on a team that planted a Church of Christ in this city on the Colombia/Venezuela border. The early morning prayer habit is something they started about five years ago, said Vickie Fry, Latin teams consultant for Great Cities Missions, which supports the work in Cúcuta.



GREAT CITIES MISSIONS

Monica and Ronald Sabino.

Why 3 a.m.? Ronald Sabino, who was born in Venezuela, remembers hearing tales as a child about the “devil’s hour,” a dark time when Satan was most active.

“He wanted to be awake to fight against the enemy through prayer,” Fry wrote in a blog post.

The Sabinos pray for strength, for their spiritual lives, for their home and children, for the people they serve. Sometimes they have to skip a night. “They both agree that on these occasions they feel restless, and they feel Satan’s darts hitting them,” Fry wrote.

They “crave the blessings” that come from their early morning prayers, Fry wrote. “When there is a problem, a difficulty or an illness and they begin to pray, they see God’s glory and how he works in a special way. ... They say that this time of prayer has grown into a necessity for their lives.”

WEBSITE: greatcities.org



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VIDEO STILL VIA YOUTUBE, EQEB PRODUCCIONES

Students and staff at the Quito School of Biblical Studies carry one of their neighbors across a mud-filled street as they clean up after a deadly landslide.

Two church members killed in South American mudslide

BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

Two members of a Church of Christ in Quito, Ecuador, are among the 24 people killed in a landslide after the South American capital experienced its heaviest rainfall in 20 years.

"We saw this immense black river that was dragging along everything," Alba Cotacachi, who lives in one of the working-class neighborhoods affected by the flooding, told Reuters. "We had to climb the walls to escape."

The debris flowed down La Gasca Street toward Colón, close to the Quito School of Biblical Studies, a ministry training program associated with Churches of Christ. In addition to the deaths, 48 people were injured.

Two of the victims, Mariela Cañaverl and husband Peter Bayas, were members of the Colón Church of Christ. They leave behind three children, two who are married and

one who is 8 years old, said Joshua Marcum, development director for Operation Ecuador, a nonprofit that supports the school.

As they mourned the loss, students at the school grabbed their neighbors clean their sidewalks and carried pedestrians who weren't wearing boots across the muddy roads.

"It was a neat feeling of solidarity with the community," Marcum said.

Meanwhile, Operation Ecuador's social media pages were flooded with condolences for the Cañaverl-Bayas family from Christians around the world.

"This is one aspect that makes God's church worldwide so special," workers with the ministry wrote. "We do not need to know our brethren personally to still share in their joys and sorrows."

WEBSITE: operationecuador.org



PHOTOS VIA OPERATION ECUADOR

Mariela Cañaverl and husband Peter Bayas were killed in a late-January landslide in Ecuador.



Now accepting applications for the position of Provost and Chief Academic Officer

LUBBOCK CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY Invites Nominations and Applications for the Position of Provost and Chief Academic Officer.

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

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

Applications will be considered until the position is filled, for most favorable consideration, please submit materials no later than April 1, 2022.

The responsibilities of the provost include:

- Ensure academic excellence in all of the University's academic programs
- Supervise the deans of the University's five colleges, as well as the director of the University Library
- Actively participate on the University's leadership team
- Manage the budget for all instructional areas
- Lead strategic planning for academic programs in alignment with the University's strategic plan
- Represent the University to various external audiences
- Provide coordination and oversight of programs and initiatives that support and advance academic excellence at LCU, including the Global Campus Office, the Rhodes Family Institute for Undergraduate Research, and other academic initiatives.

Lubbock Christian University enrolls more than 1600 students, currently offering sixty-one undergraduate majors and nineteen graduate degree programs. With approximately 90 full-time faculty members, the University enjoys a low student-faculty ratio, consistent with the high level of engagement between faculty and students. The University is a national leader in undergraduate research, maintains an emphasis for faculty on teaching and mentoring, and has a growing number of faculty who are making important scholarly contributions in their fields. Over the course of the last few years, the University has added more than 95,000 square feet of new academic space, a significant investment toward realizing the University's strategic priorities and ambitious vision as reflected in the LCU Platinum Plan.

**For more information, please visit [LCU.edu/Provost](https://www.lcu.edu/Provost).
Submit Letters of Nomination or Interest by April 1, 2022:**

LCU Provost Search Committee
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Pepperdine University invites nominations and applications for the next Dean of the Pepperdine Graziadio Business School.

Pepperdine is a Christian university committed to the highest standards of academic excellence and Christian values, where students are strengthened for lives of purpose, service, and leadership. Pepperdine is ranked in the top 50 of national universities by *U.S. News & World Report*. Pepperdine enrolls approximately 10,000 students in its five colleges and schools with approximately 400 full-time faculty and 1,100 full-time staff. In the coastal community of Malibu, California, Pepperdine hosts undergraduate and graduate programs on an 830-acre campus that has been ranked one of the most beautiful campuses in the nation by *The Princeton Review*. Pepperdine has four additional graduate campuses in the U.S., five international campuses, and additional academic programming on six continents.

For more than 50 years, the Pepperdine Graziadio Business School has been developing values-centered leaders and advancing responsible business practice within the context of Christian higher education. As a top-ranked private university, Pepperdine's Graziadio Business School offers a wide range of business programs for every stage of students' professional development. The mission of the Pepperdine Graziadio Business School is to promote transformational learning, create applied knowledge, and equip students to become Best *for* the World leaders and entrepreneurs.

Pepperdine now seeks an individual with a record of distinguished achievement who demonstrates the ability to manage a complex enterprise and provide outstanding leadership to the Pepperdine Graziadio Business School. The next Dean will lead fundraising efforts in pursuit of achieving the school's *Aspire 2025 Strategic Vision*.

Reporting to the Provost, the Dean serves as the chief executive officer of Graziadio. In that role, the Dean is primarily responsible for overseeing the school's fiscal resources. In concert with the faculty leadership, the Dean ensures academic excellence by fostering curriculum development and supporting student learning and achievement.

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(409) 722-8536, brookemichael@gmail.com.

Park Street Church of Christ, 621 Park St, Ashland, OR 97520, (541) 826-3092,
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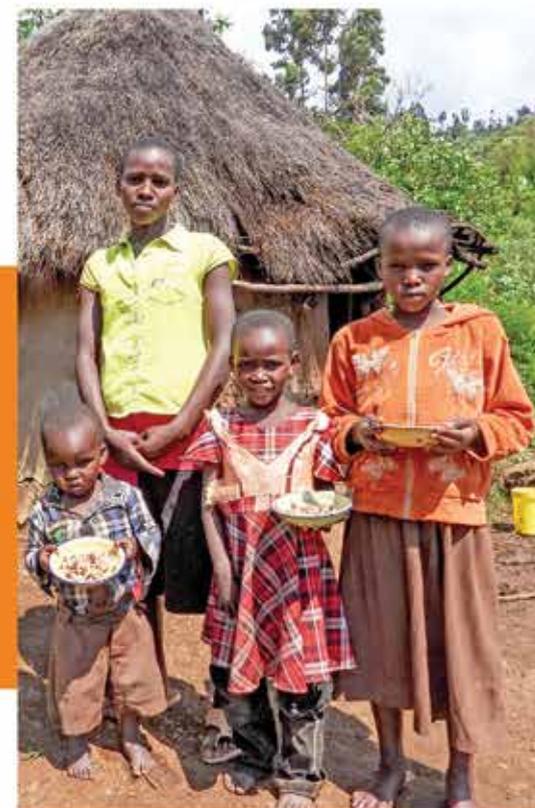
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A ministry of the Churches of Christ for over 22 years

WHEN A MEDICAL MINISTRY built an impressive clinic in rural Honduras, some feared the government would take it over. Nearly two decades later, the ministry has experienced a takeover of a different kind.

A mission of primary care

BY ERIK TRYGGESTAD | THE CHRISTIAN CHRONICLE

ERIK TRYGGESTAD

Hondurans crowd around the helicopter that brought Vice President Alberto Diaz Lobo to the opening ceremony for Predisan's Good Samaritan Clinic in 2003.

LA CAMPANA, Honduras

A military helicopter landed in a soccer field about an hour from this Central American village 18 years ago.

As the *whup-whup-whup* of the propeller blades came to a stop, government officials in suits, including Honduran vice president Alberto Diaz Lobo, walked across the pitch and into the newly built Good Samaritan Clinic in the city of Catacamas for a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

"I want to recognize all the humanitarian spirit that you must have," the vice president told the assembly of Honduran physicians, ministers and representatives of Churches of Christ in the U.S. who had helped make the clinic a reality.

The facility was named for Jesus'

parable of the Samaritan, a man reviled by Jewish society who nonetheless showed mercy and provided healing for a Jewish man in desperate need. The new clinic would operate under Predisan, a medical mission that takes its name from the Spanish words for "preach" and "heal."

Lobo marveled at the 20,000-square-foot clinic, complete with surgical and dental suites. There was little else like it in all of Olancho, a rugged, mountainous state in eastern Honduras, home to more than a half-million souls. Yet one public health official, Dr. Mirna de Lobo, challenged the Christians to "make this project bigger."

"We have the dream," she said, "that the people in public health are going to learn to give the quality of care that



AUDREY JACKSON

Despite the Predisan clinic, Pech people including Emerita Duarte, 75, had limited access to reliable care.

the people of Predisan are giving."

Some of the U.S. supporters began to murmur. Had they made the facility too nice? Would the health officials designate it as a community hospital? Would the government

take over? What about the ministry's spiritual mission — to provide care and improve lives, opening doors for the gospel?

As he glanced at the clinic's newly painted walls, Vice President Diaz Lobo told the Christians to "take really good care of it. Don't let it deteriorate."

NEW CLINIC ... SO WHAT?

After the ribbon cutting, life didn't change much for the people of La Campana, including Emerita Duarte. The Good Samaritan Clinic was 35 miles away over mountainous, gravel-and-dirt roads that become impassable when it rains.

Duarte is Pech, an Indigenous people who have lived in Olancho since the early 1800s, when they

CONTINUED



AUDREY JACKSON

At a mountainside clinic in El Cerro, Honduras, Predisan worker Dennis Santos shows a map with push pins denoting the locations of families the clinic serves.



AUDREY JACKSON

A mother-to-be waits to deliver at a dormitory at a clinic in Catacamas.



ERIK TRYGGESTAD

Color-coded folders, divided by communities, hold the medical records of families served by the El Cerro clinic in the Culmí municipality.



AUDREY JACKSON

Dr. Freddy Juárez takes Emerita Duarte's blood pressure during a home visit in the community of La Campana, Honduras.

CONTINUED

were forced by Spanish colonists to leave their homeland on the island of Roatán. They speak in patches of their ancient language and Spanish. Like many Indigenous peoples in rural Central America, the Pech have limited access to health care.

A small, government-run clinic is just a short walk up a hillside path from Duarte's home, but she rarely

went there. It had one staffer, irregular hours and little in the way of medications. If she needed a doctor, she had to walk nearly five miles to wait in a long queue at the main clinic in Culmí, about five miles away. The rugged trek took at least 90 minutes. To be seen, she had to leave at 4 or 5 in the morning, she said.

The lack of resources took a terrible toll on old and young alike. Despite having a network of 17 rural clinics, the Culmí municipality had the highest rates of maternal death and infant mortality in the country.

Workers from Predisan made mobile medical trips into Culmí and referred some patients to the Good Samaritan Clinic. But the lines at Culmí's clinic kept getting longer. The situation was deteriorating.

NOT THE TAKEOVER THEY EXPECTED

That changed in 2014, when the Honduran government approached Predisan about using the ministry's resources to provide better care for the people of Culmí.

It wasn't the government takeover that the U.S. Christians had feared when the Good Samaritan Clinic opened 11 years earlier.

It was, in fact, quite the opposite. Through a process called "decentralization," the Honduran health services turned administration of the rural clinics over to Predisan, empowering

the ministry to act as primary care for the Culmí region. The ministry brought in new staff with funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Predisan also used its own funds to bring in chaplains for the clinics.

"We have something in common with the government. We provide services to the poorest of the poor," said Dr. Freddy Juárez, a physician who coordinates five of the clinics for Predisan, including several in Pech communities. "We have the opportunity to provide the love of God with our actions."

The transition wasn't easy, said Frank López, a registered nurse who serves Predisan as healthy communities director.

"People in Culmí had a culture of not going to the doctor, and when they went, it was closed," he said. "People wouldn't treat them well. So we had to start our job from zero."

MAPS, PUSH PINS, BREAD AND FISH

Predisan assembled "family health teams," including those who speak Pech, to visit villages and talk about disease prevention and nutrition. In the clinics, workers put up detailed, hand-drawn maps showing the locations of homes, marking families with push pins. Soon, the walls were lined

with graphs charting the prevalence of maladies like dengue, zika and COVID-19 in their communities.

Staffers launched a "Madre Estrella" ("Star Mother") program that encourages women to get regular checkups, take prenatal vitamins and undergo screenings for cervical cancer, one of the main causes of death for mothers in Honduras.

During a recent visit to the main clinic in Culmí, coordinator Eblin Gómez produced detailed graphs and pie charts showing recent declines in maternal deaths and infant mortality. Parents now bring their children in for regular checkups and ask for immunizations, Gómez said.

That wasn't the case 35 years ago, when Predisan began working among Honduras' rural communities, said Amanda Madrid, the ministry's CEO. Back then, she said, "they came after me with machetes."

The work in Culmí has garnered international attention. Dr. Hugo Godoy, a health official with the Interamerican Development Bank, the largest source of development financing in Latin America and the Caribbean, praised the work of the

family health teams, which has reduced the prevalence of childhood ailments including pneumonia.

More impressive, Godoy said, is the "incredible love for others and positive attitude" shown by health-care workers to the poorest in their communities. In Predisan, "the Ministry of Health and the population have incorporated an excellent partner," he said, "with Christian values and principles."

A delegation from the Dominican Republic traveled to Culmí to see the work as part of the Mesoamerica Health Initiative, an endeavor to improve care across the region with funding from local governments, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Carlos Slim Foundation and the government of Spain.

Dr. Luz Herrera, assessor of maternal and child health for the Dominican government, was "pleasantly impressed with the high standard of quality, neatness, efficiency and order of the service that Predisan offers," she said.

"Their ability to do so much with so little," Herrera said, "recalls the biblical miracle of the multiplication of bread and fish."

'Their ability to do so much with so little recalls the biblical miracle of the multiplication of bread and fish.'

Dr. Luz Herrera, a public health official in the Dominican Republic, after a tour of the rural clinics overseen by Predisan.



ERIK TRYGGESTAD

Grandmother María Isabelle Anariba prays at a dormitory in Culmí, where her daughter is soon to deliver.

'THE CHRISTIANS TREAT EVERYONE THE SAME'

The turnaround couldn't come at a better time, said Dr. Cruz Barahona, who works in the Culmí clinic's maternity ward. In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, the region is experiencing a baby boom. Barahona had little time to talk. He's averaging 16 to 18 ultrasounds per day.

Many women must travel for hours, across creeks that become impassable in heavy rains, to reach the Culmí birthing center. So Predisan improved the clinic's onsite facilities for pregnant women and their families to await their children's births. Chaplains make regular visits and pray with the families for healthy deliveries.

"The Christians treat everyone the same. They're united," said María Isabelle Anariba, a 56-year-old who was awaiting the birth of her eighth grandchild at the Culmí clinic. "I see that, and I'm very grateful. They love everyone the same."

"I have been treated for high blood pressure here," she added. "I know how they treat me. I feel like they care about our health."



AUDREY JACKSON

Leopoldo Duarte serves as an auxiliary nurse at the La Campana clinic.

HOUSE CALLS AND PRAYERS

Back in La Campana, the small clinic up the hill from Emerita Duarte is now fully staffed and has regular hours.

Still, she rarely goes there. They come to her.

On a recent Tuesday afternoon Dr. Freddy Juárez made a house call, checking Duarte's blood pressure and asking her about her medications. Standing nearby was Leopoldo Duarte, an auxiliary nurse who's not directly related to Emerita but is a member of the Pech community.

He taught a group of visitors a few Pech phrases, including

"akaparkagua" ("thank you") and one that sounds like "in kara kaisa" and basically means "how are you doing?"

Leopoldo Duarte has worked at the clinic for 11 years and was its sole employee before Predisan took oversight. It was a lonely job, he said, and he didn't have anyone to train. Now the clinic has desks, chairs and a better record-keeping system. Nurses and physicians are here regularly. A chaplain comes to do devotionals daily. If he can't make it, the staff does its own devotionals.

"That's the main thing," Leopoldo Duarte said of the spiritual focus. "That is what we should be doing in the first place."

Emerita Duarte, now 75, agreed. In addition to the medical house calls, she gets regular visits from Predisan chaplains — and regular prayers. In faded letters scrawled across her abode wall are the words "Dios es amor" ("God is love").

"That's very important," she said, glancing up at the words. "We can't do anything without God."

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— Erik Tryggestad, president and CEO

HIGHER EDUCATION

ABILENE CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

ABILENE, Texas — Abilene Christian broke ground Feb. 18 on the university's newest residence hall.

The facility will be named Wessel Hall in honor of donors Rick and Debbie Wessel, ACU officials said.

The planned 96,000-square-foot hall will be four stories high and house 350 first-year students, including an honors living/learning community and a three-bedroom apartment for a faculty-in-residence.

The new building will replace Gardner Hall, which housed ACU women for 60 years, and is the next step in ACU's Freshman Village project, a comprehensive renovation and construction campaign.

FAULKNER UNIVERSITY

MONTGOMERY, Ala. — Two federal grants totaling \$4.25 million will help Faulkner support programs for minority students.

To help implement the grants, Faulkner has hired Don McKnight as project director and Justin Boyd as STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) series coordinator and assistant professor.

One grant, worth \$3 million, "is geared toward improving retention and graduation rates of traditional African American students via an integrated student support system from their first day on campus through graduation," said Dave Rampersad, vice president of academic affairs.

FLORIDA COLLEGE

TEMPLE TERRACE, Fla. — John Weaver will be the sixth president of Florida College, the school announced on Feb. 10. The college is associated primarily with non-institutional Churches of Christ and only accepts support from individual Christians, not churches.

In June, Weaver will take over the job from Buddy Payne, who has served as the college's president for 12 years. Weaver holds a doctorate in New Testament and early



DON MOONEY

New endowed scholarship honors late Texas church elder

Emily Bullock, center, celebrates the launch of the Joe D. Bullock Endowed Scholarship for Doctoral Studies at Harding School of Theology in Memphis, Tenn. Steve Cloer, an assistant professor of ministry, and his wife, Lindsay, created the endowment in memory of Emily Bullock's late husband. Joe Bullock, who died last year from COVID-19, served as an elder of the Southside Church of Christ in Fort Worth, Texas, where Steve Cloer preached for 15 years. "Joe was a big influence in my life and encouraged me in my doctoral studies," Steve Cloer said. "Now his influence will live on through this fund."



Rampersad

Christianity from Emory University and is currently Florida College's academic dean as well as a preacher in the area.

Weaver comes from a line of Florida College alumni. He attended for a time, as did his parents and grandparents — including the college's second president, James Cope. His wife, Vivi, is also an alumna, and one of his five children is a current student.

"As president, I can assure you that the college will remain firm to its foundation, allegiant to Jesus Christ, submissive to the pattern of sound teaching in the Holy Scriptures and committed to educating youth for service to God and neighbor," Weaver said in a prepared statement.



Weaver

K-12 CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

MIDLAND CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

MIDLAND, Texas — Four top administrators and a coach at Midland Christian School have been arrested on charges they tried to hide a student's alleged sexual assault from police.

Police also arrested an unidentified minor. Details were emerging at press time. Read the full story at christianchronicle.org/midlandarrests.

with Churches of Christ.

The new space at 4108 Hillsboro Pike — about three miles down the road — used to be a Tuesday Morning. CEO Matthew McInteer said the three-story building, which will be shared with a bank and other stores, will offer a little more space and will be able to house the business' bookstore, publishing operations and most of its warehouse in one place.

As for the old building, McInteer said it's been sold to a developer and will likely be torn down.

The Christian publisher had plans to move before the COVID-19 pandemic that fell apart and had to be restarted a few times.

"Trying to plan for the future was kind of tricky as we went into survival mode as churches shut down for a while," McInteer said. "And then as we're coming out of it, this is probably our best fit going forward."

PUBLISHING

21ST CENTURY CHRISTIAN

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Publisher and bookstore 21st Century Christian has left its location on 12th Avenue South — where it had been since 1965 — and relocated to a new spot in the Green Hills area. It's a bittersweet move for the company, which is associated



THE BRAMBLETT GROUP

Steven Curo, a minister for the Parker Church of Christ in Colorado, takes notes during the 2022 Hispanic Workshop, part of the Freed-Hardeman lectures.



THE BRAMBLETT GROUP

Jesse Eaton, worship minister for the Stantonville Church of Christ in Tennessee, leads an original song written for the lectures by Alan Kinningham.

VOICES

Nostalgia with compassion

What does it feel like to be back among people at a Bible lectureship?

“Nostalgic,” said Madison Arnold, a freshman studying psychology at Freed-Hardeman University. She and fellow freshman Madalyn Spicer said that the gathering reminded them of times they’ve spent at events including the Challenge Youth Conference and Lads to Leaders conventions. Both students are members of the Spring Meadows Church of Christ in Spring Hill, Tenn.

People have been “angry and cooped up,” Spicer said, adding that this year’s theme of compassion was needed in a badly divided society. “We overcomplicate things. We need to love people regardless of who they are.”

After graduating in a pandemic, Arnold said that, so far, her freshman year has been “exactly what I was hoping for.”



ERIK TRYGGESTAD

Madison Arnold and Madalyn Spicer.

FHU: We ‘ought not be ashamed’ of the church

FROM PAGE 1

publicly about the officer. He knew the backlash he would receive from some: “Oh, look at TJ. He’s a sellout.”

“I didn’t speak up,” said Kirk, who spoke to attendees and students at the university, which is associated with Churches of Christ, during chapel in Loyd Auditorium near the midpoint of the weeklong lectures.

The experience shaped his understanding of Jesus’ parable of the Good Samaritan, described in Luke 10. The Samaritan, part of an ethnic group reviled as traitors and half-breeds by the Jews, also was given a “pass” to disregard a Jew he found alongside a road, robbed and beaten.

Yet the Samaritan showed kindness that would have earned derision from his own people. Kirk said: “Look at him. He’s got a little money now, and now he’s hanging out with those Jewish folks. Look at all the money he’s spending on this Jew who would spit on him if he were in that situation.”

Jesus used the parable to help people understand what it means to “love thy neighbor as thyself,” Kirk said. “But Jesus, being the master teacher that he is, doesn’t just stop with teaching a story. He lives it out in his life. And it’s recorded in Scripture how he went about doing good, even to the marginalized.”

EVANGELISM IN THE MIDST OF DIVISION

Outside the auditorium, Billy R. Smith rushed to introduce one of the lectureship speakers — but had to make frequent stops to hug former

students as they flagged him down.

“I had to see you to remember how good it is to see you,” said Smith, a longtime minister and Bible professor at Freed-Hardeman.

For many, the lectures were the first large-scale event they had attended since the COVID-19 pandemic began — just weeks after the 2020 lectures. Last year Freed-Hardeman conducted the event entirely online.

“You could feel the crowd, the energy,” said Andrew Phillips, pulpit minister for the Graymere Church of Christ in Columbia, Tenn. “It’s exciting to see people’s enthusiasm.”

The lectureship, especially the singing, provided “a breath of fresh air,” said Jon Hackett, minister for the Kingston Church of Christ in east Tennessee, as he caught up with friends in the Brewer Sports Center, where the FHU Associates had set up an “F.H. Brew” coffee bar.

For two years, many Christians lived “isolated in anxiety,” Hackett said. One attendee told *The Christian Chronicle* that she had lost her husband just months ago to the virus.

Debby Allen lost both of her parents during the pandemic. The Freed-Hardeman graduate and member of the Dexter Church of Christ in southeast Missouri said she was glad to be among her brothers and sisters in Christ.

“COVID showed us how much we

need each other,” she said. It also “opened our eyes to the need for evangelism.”

Several attendees shared stories of starting up small congregations in their driveways during the pandemic and inviting their neighbors. One attendee worshipped with what

he called “the Nature Trail Church of Christ,” named after his subdivision.

But the pandemic dealt equal doses of division, as quarrels over masks, vaccines and politics infected congregations. That’s

part of the reason organizers chose “He Went About Doing Good: The Compassion of Christ in Luke” as the lectureship’s theme.

“Out of all the qualities of Jesus — all of which I love — his compassion is what I love most,” said Smith, who was honored at a dinner during the lectureship for his 47-year career with the university, which included stints as dean of the College of Biblical Studies and as Distinguished Professor of Bible.

Smith taught a “Life of Christ” class for 40 years to thousands of Freed-Hardeman students. Throughout the course, “I would stop and say, ‘How can you not love him?’”

This year’s topic was timely, Hackett said. In a world that seems intent on tearing itself apart, “we’re poised for a great opportunity in evangelism.”

But to reach an increasingly



Smith



Allen



ERIK TRYGGESTAD

Kirk named Freed-Hardeman VP

TJ Kirk, a middle school principal in Henderson, Tenn., and his wife, Shiradon, receive congratulations after Kirk's chapel talk at Freed-Hardeman University. As chapel ended, president David Shannon announced that Kirk will serve as vice president for student services. Along with working in areas from career services to campus safety, Kirk will help students in their spiritual and social development, Shannon said. Kirk, who earned a bachelor's and master's from the university, will complete the school year as principal before beginning the new job in June.

divided world, "we've got to be more compassionate — not only in our communities, but in our churches," Hackett said. "As ministers, we must battle the secular and political with the spiritual, and that's not always easy to do."

'EVERYBODY MATTERS TO GOD'

In a divided world, "you can't preach Jesus without preaching about the church," said Samuel Jones.

During an evening sermon, the associate minister for the East Jackson Church of Christ in Tennessee noted how Jesus began to preach in Matthew 4 after the arrest of John the Baptist. Jesus's message: "Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

"Brothers and sisters, we ought not to be ashamed to be a member of the Lord's church," Jones said.

As a part of that church, Christ followers should "be about what Jesus was about, doing good."

Doing good means pursuing justice, said Melvin Otey, a minister and law professor at Faulkner University in Alabama. In a morning session, Otey charted prophecies about Jesus through Old Testament prophets including Isaiah, Jeremiah and Micah. Each urged God's children to take care of the poor, the widows and

the oppressed.

"Some of the oppressed have never been born. They can't speak for themselves. Shouldn't we speak for them?" Otey asked. "But there are some who have been born. They're being oppressed, too. They're being mistreated, too. We ought to speak for them. We do that in the church because everybody matters to God."

'THERE'S A PEW RIGHT NEXT TO ME FOR YOU'

As he concluded his chapel talk, TJ Kirk urged lectureship goers to follow Jesus' example of serving the underserved — those judged unfairly and kicked out of society. To those people, Jesus said, "Welcome home."

"And we have to take that message out of this auditorium," Kirk said.

He urged the audience to say to the marginalized: "There's a home, there's a church, there's a place, there's a pew right next to me for you and your family where you don't have to be on the outskirts. ... And ultimately, when this short life is over, you'll have a place for eternity where you can rest.

"Jesus went about doing good. Let's continue the story as Jesus' people."

After the talk, Freed-Hardeman president David Shannon prayed, asking God to "forgive us for the times we failed you by failing others.

"Thank you for the refreshment that you give us through your grace and mercy, and help us be graceful and merciful to others."



Jones

Youth & Family Minister

The West Broward Church of Christ in Plantation (Fort Lauderdale), Florida, is seeking an additional minister to work in the area of youth and family. The ideal candidate is personable and outgoing, has at least five years of youth and family ministry experience, has an education in Bible and is effective at public speaking. Please send a resume, references and philosophy of ministry and doctrine to:

Youth and Family Minister Search
West Broward Church of Christ,
12550 W Broward, Blvd Plantation, FL 33325
office@wbcoc.com wbcoc.com

Children & Family Minister

College Avenue Church of Christ is a Christ-centered, Spirit-filled, grace-oriented congregation seeking an individual who has a passion for sharing God's love with children. We are proud of our strong ministries and our positive community reputation. For more information, visit cacoc.org or on Facebook.

College Avenue Church of Christ,
1817 N College Ave, El Dorado, AR 71730-5211
(870) 862-1552, cacoc@suddenlinkmail.com



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Bay Area Church of Christ is a diverse congregation that meets just outside of Tampa, Florida. Our ethnic and economic diversity sets us apart as a place where people from all walks of life come together to worship God. The Bay Area church family consists of 300+ members who are committed to showing God's love to the community, and we want our teens to be a part of that. The youth ministry is primarily focused on encouraging the spiritual formation of our young people and helping them integrate with the body of Christ. The ideal candidate would be married with at least a bachelor's degree. We are seeking a full-time youth minister; experience is a plus. We offer a competitive salary with benefits.

Send resume to: office@Bayareachurch.org

Seeking Full-Time Pulpit Minister - Titusville, Florida

The North Brevard Church of Christ (NBCC) is seeking a preacher with at least 10 years experience. The NBCC has an average attendance of 160. We are in a rapidly growing area near Kennedy Space Center. A minimum of a bachelor's degree is required. (Information should include: a link to an archive or DVD of three consecutive sermons, a resume describing work history, education and references. Electronic copies would be helpful.)

North Brevard Church of Christ
(Attention: Search Committee)

PO Box 2136

Titusville, FL 32781-2136

NORTHBREVARDCHURCHOFCHRIST.ORG



Children and Family Minister Kingwood, Texas

The Kingwood Church of Christ is seeking a Children and Family minister who is a dynamic learner for Christ with a passion for leading kids to an authentic, life-long walk with God. Our church is home to approximately 500 members with a children's group ages infant through 5th grade. Kingwood Church of Christ offers a variety of children's classes including Sunday school, children's worship and Wednesday evening classes. The Children and Family minister will be responsible for oversight and coordination of all areas of the children's ministry and helping to develop more meaningful family worship time and events in coordination with the youth minister and lead minister.

Interested personnel please submit a cover letter and resume to searchcommittee@kwcc.org. More detailed information on vacancy can be found on the church website at www.kwcc.org.

HISTORY: 'We need to engage. We need to understand'

FROM PAGE 3

told a crowd of about 850 students, faculty and community members.

She paused just briefly.

"My father was never in the military," she continued, drawing laughter from the audience. "He was born with an enlarged heart. He could not serve."

Another site indicated that Brown was so incensed with segregated schools that he flew to New York and met with Thurgood Marshall, the NAACP attorney who later would become the Supreme Court's first African American justice.

"My father never met Thurgood Marshall," Henderson revealed.

Still another myth: Brown — with a wife and three daughters — was chosen as the lead plaintiff "because of all the litigants, they were the only intact family," Henderson said.

That's not true either.

"Everybody was a mom and dad and children," Henderson said of the other 12 plaintiffs in the federal lawsuit against Topeka public schools.

THE ROLE OF FAITH

Coinciding with Black History Month, the History Speaks program each year brings civil rights leaders to Oklahoma Christian, which is associated with Churches of Christ.

Past speakers include Claudette Colvin, Fred Gray, Andrew Young and Carlotta Walls LaNier and Terrence Roberts of the "Little Rock Nine."

"Oftentimes, when we think about history, we think about long ago, and we think about black-and-white pictures," said Gary Jones, Oklahoma Christian's assistant dean of students and director of diversity. "But we don't realize that these things are just a generation away."



JUDSON COPELAND

Gary Jones listens to Cheryl Brown Henderson at Oklahoma Christian University's ninth annual History Speaks event.

The university's president, John deSteiguer, said it's important to "discuss real-world topics that are playing out in real time in our society because Jesus said that even though we are not of this world, we are in this world.

"We need to engage. We need to understand. We need to be better because God calls us to be better. And we need to do better when it comes to how we treat each other."

Part of that engagement, he said, involves hearing "compelling and important" accounts of history from people who witnessed it — people such as Henderson.

As Henderson explained, a common belief is that Brown v. Board was all about one little girl: Brown's 7-year-old daughter, Linda, who could not attend the White school near her house but had to walk several blocks to catch a bus to attend a Black school.

The idea is that Oliver Brown was angered that his daughter couldn't enroll at the closer school and initiated the lawsuit.

In fact, the NAACP recruited Brown

to join its lawsuit, Henderson said.

One Sunday morning in the summer of 1950, attorney Charles Scott Sr., Brown's childhood friend, came to the family's house after church. At the time, Brown was a welder studying to become a pastor. Henderson's mother, Leola, was pregnant with her.

"We were a typical 1950s family," Henderson said. "But maybe we were atypical in that Mom was a Baptist, and she stayed that way. Dad was a Methodist, and he stayed that way."

Leola would take Henderson's two older sisters to New Mt. Zion Baptist Church. Oliver would go to St. John African Methodist Episcopal Church by himself. But the whole family was home in time for Scott's visit that Sunday.

Oliver was a huge fan of Joe Louis — the longtime world heavyweight champion nicknamed the "Brown Bomber" — and tried boxing before going into ministry.

After Oliver was knocked out for the first time, he "had an epiphany there on the mat," his daughter joked.

He turned to theology.

Leola later became a "Metho-Baptist," her daughter quipped, and joined Oliver's church when he became pastor of St. Mark African Methodist Episcopal Church in Topeka, where he served from 1953 to 1959.

From 1959 until a heart attack claimed his life at age 42 in 1961, he ministered at the Benton Avenue AME Church in Springfield, Mo.

The Sunday of Scott's visit, the

attorney asked Oliver if he'd be willing to be a part of the Topeka lawsuit the NAACP was putting together. Nine mothers of elementary-age children had already agreed to join the effort. Oliver asked if the legal team was recruiting any other fathers. Scott indicated that they were.

Oliver agreed to think about it, and his wife helped persuade him, Henderson said.

"I think his faith played a role in his willingness to say yes," his daughter said in an interview. "It's my understanding from my mom that the conversation did center around, 'You're becoming a pastor and taking on a leadership role ... and this is something that a faithful person would do.'"

'THE PRINCIPLE OF THE THING'

Before Brown v. Board, Kansas was the battleground for nearly a dozen other school desegregation cases, starting with Tinnon v. Ottawa in 1881. Those cases helped pave the way for the landmark lawsuit, Henderson said.

When Brown v. Board was filed, junior high and high schools in Topeka were integrated for academic studies. But extracurricular activities, from football and basketball teams to cheerleading squads, were segregated.

Topeka's four Black elementary schools were "beautiful brick buildings," Henderson said, filled with African American teachers who "held more advanced degrees than their

"We conclude that, in the field of public education, the doctrine of 'separate but equal' has no place. Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal."

ADAM JONES, VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

A quote from the landmark 1954 decision is seen at a historic site in Topeka, Kan.

White counterparts because there was no outlet for that master's or post-master's work other than that classroom."

"So it wasn't the quality. It wasn't the facility. It wasn't school buses," she said of the reason for the class-action lawsuit. "It was the principle of the thing."

The other 12 plaintiffs were women, including Darlene Brown, who alphabetically should have been the lead plaintiff. Contrary to what Scott told Oliver Brown initially, no other fathers were added to the lawsuit, which was filed on Feb. 28, 1951.

"We do have to face the reality that my dad's gender is probably what garnered him his place in history," Henderson said.

When the Supreme Court agreed to hear *Brown v. Board*, the Kansas lawsuit was consolidated with four other school desegregation cases — from Delaware, the District of Columbia, South Carolina and Virginia.

In all, there were more than 200 plaintiffs. So the decision wasn't just about one little girl.

Linda Brown, Henderson's sister who became the face of the lawsuit in part because of a *Life* magazine article, died at age 75 in 2018.

Henderson's mother, Leola Brown Montgomery, is still living. She turned 100 in May 2021 and was able to attend a grand opening three months later for Oliver Brown Elementary School, a public school in Manhattan, Kan., named after her late husband.

Montgomery told the local newspaper, *The Mercury*, that her late husband would be "thrilled beyond belief" to have a school named in his honor.

"He would've wondered if he was worthy of it," she said.

In her visit to Oklahoma Christian, Henderson noted that *Brown v. Board* was a catalyst for the civil rights movement.

Civil rights icon Martin Luther King Jr.'s first marches on Washington in the late 1950s were to urge the federal government to follow through on the decision's call for integrated schools.

King had an activist theology, she said, "knowing that, 'What good is it to save souls if you're going to hate your fellow man?'"

"So I implore all of you in this room," she told the Christian audience, "when injustice rears its ugly head, the only reaction should be showing up, standing up and speaking up."

Full-time Minister - Michigan

The church in Escanaba, Michigan, located in the beautiful Upper Peninsula (UP), is seeking applicants for a full-time minister position.

Responsibilities to our 55-member congregation would include: preaching, teaching, community outreach, and some administrative duties. We produce the television/internet ministry LET THE BIBLE SPEAK (LTBS). Our minister works with other ministers in the UP to host this 30-minute TV Bible study. You can view episodes of LTBS on our web page: <http://www.letthebiblespeak.net>.

The applicant will need to send a cover letter, resume, and video samples of their lessons to:

Escanaba Church of Christ, Attn: Elders
PO Box 751, Escanaba, MI 49829
escanabacoc@gmail.com

The **Hot Springs Village Church of Christ** is seeking a full-time Youth and Family Minister. We are in the world's largest gated community with lots of amenities and are served by two school districts. We are a very active community and mission-minded congregation of 200+. We are seeking someone with a strong biblical background and a desire to teach and learn. We have an active and involved youth group. Worship/song leading ability is a plus.

For more information or to send resume:
Chad Knappier, 210 Balboa Rd
Hot Springs Village, Arkansas 71909
(501) 226-9060 or readthischad@gmail.com

Full-time Pulpit Preacher/ Evangelist Search

Hermitage Church of Christ is looking for a full-time pulpit preacher/evangelist. Applicants should be a graduate of a Bible college or school of preaching. Duties will include (but are not limited to) evangelizing through community outreach, preaching, teaching Bible classes, visiting members of the congregation and contacting members of the congregation. We are seeking a married man. The candidate's lessons should accurately reflect and convey Biblical truths, the gospel of Christ, and the nature of God.

Hermitage is located in northwestern Pennsylvania. It is a middle-class community with good schools and is approximately 40,000 people in size. It is located conveniently near U.S. Route 80 and is approximately one hour from Pittsburgh and two hours from Cleveland, Ohio. There are several colleges and universities nearby.

Salary will be commensurate with experience. Please send resume with references and CD/DVD's of or links to two sermons to:

Gabriel Illes, Ministerial Committee
4835 Miller South Road
Bristolville, Ohio 44402-9723

NAPERVILLE CHURCH OF CHRIST

Full-time Lead Minister - Naperville, Illinois

The Naperville Church of Christ is seeking a full-time Lead Minister. The applicant should have a minimum of a bachelor's degree in theology, divinity, Christian learning or related field, and, ideally, have five or more years serving as a pulpit minister. He will serve under the support of our six elders and alongside our Youth Minister and office staff. Responsibilities include weekly sermons, co-leading worship services, and working with the elders and ministry leaders to help meet the spiritual needs of the congregation. The Naperville Church of Christ is located in Naperville, Ill., approximately 30 miles west of downtown Chicago. The area offers a diverse, dynamic community, highly ranked school system and family offerings. Our congregation is culturally diverse with members residing throughout the western suburbs. Average weekly attendance is approximately 200.

For more information about us and this position, visit napervillechurch.org/ministersearch.

All resumes, curriculum vitae, cover letters and inquiries should be submitted to:
ministersearch@napervillechurch.org

Minister Search - Medford, Oregon

The **West Main Church of Christ** is actively seeking a leader who does as Jesus did by talking to the people in their homes and communities. Our church family is seeking a visionary to lead the saved and the lost to the kingdom of God by guiding us and being involved with us.

Our lead minister will appreciate the rich heritage within the Churches of Christ. He will also envision a future not bound by tradition but open to the leadership of the Holy Spirit. With a firm commitment to the Bible and a desire to apply its truth to the 21st Century, our new minister will provide leadership, instruction, and be a role model for a church that is looking to glorify Christ. He will be first and foremost a man of integrity in all aspects of his life. He will be respected in his home, church, and community.

The ideal candidate will be at the forefront of designing and preparing the Sunday worship while being open to sharing the preaching duties in order to focus on being • A Biblical Teacher • A People Person • A Relationship Builder • A Caring Disciple • An Active Collaborator.

For further information and to apply, visit our website: churchofchristmedford.org

Seeking Full-time Minister – Decatur, Illinois

The **North Jasper Street Church of Christ** is seeking a full-time minister who desires to grow with the congregation. Jasper Street is a conservative congregation, primarily African American, seeking an individual dedicated to the cause of Christ. The applicant should possess sound biblical knowledge, have a few years of preaching experience, good interpersonal people skills (with the ability to motivate and inspire), and a loving, supportive wife. All interested persons need to submit a resume, references, and a video of a recent sermon(s) to the attention of the leadership:

North Jasper Street Church of Christ
950 N Jasper St, Decatur, IL. 62521
(217) 423-2823 Jaspoc950@yahoo.com

FULL-TIME MINISTER HOWELL, MICHIGAN

The church of Christ in Howell, Michigan, is looking for a pulpit minister who will work with the elders to motivate the church both spiritually and numerically. We are a close, loving congregation in a soul-rich environment. Salary and benefits are negotiable. Check us out at our website, howellchurchofchrist.org. If you are interested, please submit a resume, a sermon, and salary/benefits needed to:

Search Committee
PO Box 82, Howell, MI 48844
belcher0804@att.net

Milestones

Showcase the lives of your loved ones — birth and wedding announcements, anniversaries, memorials, honors for longtime ministers and workers and more. Contact milestones@christianchronicle.org for rates and more information.

Memorials

David Curtis Crouch 1948-2022

David Curtis Crouch died Jan. 31, 2022, in Searcy, Ark. He was born Jan. 29, 1948, in Rockwood, Tenn.

He graduated from Harding University in 1970 with a bachelor's in biology. During his freshman year, he met and fell in love with Lola Ann Murry of Hattiesburg, Miss. The couple married Aug. 2, 1969.

He worked four years on the student newspaper, *The Bison*. In 1970 the Arkansas College Press Association named him top editorial writer.

Just two months after graduating, he returned to Harding to work as director of news services. That was the beginning of a 46-year career with the university. He served in various public relations roles including director of placement and alumni relations. David directed the school's public relations office for 29 years before retiring in August 2016.

He was a member of the College Church of Christ in Searcy for more than 52 years. He also served as a deacon for the congregation and as a Bible school teacher. Weekly, he donated his time to work at His House, a benevolent ministry of the church. He and Lola taught in the World English Institute Bible correspondence ministry.

He is survived by his wife of 52 years, Lola Ann (Murry) Crouch; daughter Tracy Cunningham (Todd) of Smyrna, Tenn.; sons Eric Crouch (Beth) of Bluff City, Tenn., and Brandon Crouch of San Francisco, Calif.; and grandchildren Jace, Jaden and Jencyn Cunningham and Hailey and Carson Crouch. He was preceded in death by his parents and a brother, Richard Crouch.



Cameron Fore 2001-2022

Cameron Scott Fore, 20, died Jan. 26, 2022, in a car crash in Wells, Maine. He was born and raised at Memorial Church of Christ in Houston alongside his older brother, Cole. His father, Bron, serves as a deacon, and his mother, Donna, is the finance manager for the church.

Cameron was adventurous. In high school he played football, a sport he excelled in. He climbed mountains with the youth group. After graduation he set off for Maine to live out his dreams with his best friend, Chase.

Cameron was a servant. He loved to help people, especially on those hard hikes! He would often carry other people's packs or lighten their load by hauling their gear.

Cameron is a Christian. Cameron wasn't perfect, but he trusted in the perfect Savior, Jesus Christ. He began his journey with Jesus on June 26, 2011, when he made Jesus the Lord of his life. Now Cameron has received his eternal reward. Cameron's legacy is one of helping others.

Memorial contributions may be made to Christian Homes and Family Services of Abilene, Texas (www.facebook.com/ChristianHomes).



Jerome Sally Gilbert 1932-2021

Jerome Sally Gilbert, 89, died Nov. 1, 2021. Born May 13, 1932, she will be remembered for her dedication to her family, community and the church of Christ.

After obeying the gospel in 1950, she led her mother and husband of nearly 69 years to Christ. They were married April 1, 1950. Ealgie Gilbert

Sr., who preached for more than 64 years, preceded her in death on March 14, 2019. Together they devoted themselves to the spreading of the gospel using their homes as an extension of the then Gum Street Church of Christ in North Little Rock, Ark. His evangelistic ministry prepared him to establish several congregations in Little Rock and surrounding areas. Many souls were added to the church because of their unselfish, tireless energy for the Lord.

Jerome was diligent in teaching and training women young and old. She was a motivator and encourager and also knew how to rebuke with love. Through the years, many lodged in their home until they could get on

their feet. Jerome shared in many forums on ladies programs because of her biblical knowledge and stance for the truth. Whenever we gathered, we could never depart without singing and praying.

She leaves to mourn her passing: Wayne Lee of Baton Rouge, La.; Erma Savage; Clara (Kenneth) Collins; Ealgie "Jack" Gilbert (Sandra); Larry Gilbert (Brenda); Annette Gilbert; Adron Gilbert (Gwen), all of Little Rock, Ark.; 45 grandchildren and 35 great-grandchildren.

John Hollingsworth 1930-2022

John Granville Hollingsworth died Jan. 31, 2022, at the age of 91.

He was born Nov. 21, 1930, in Chattanooga, Tenn., and married Davida Smith on Jan. 4, 1949, in Rossville, Ga.

John graduated from Isaac Litton High School in Nashville, Tenn., Freed Hardeman College, David

Lipscomb College, Harding Graduate School, and Pepperdine College. He also received an honorary doctorate from Freed-Hardeman University.

His career consisted of ministry throughout his adult life in Tennessee, Alabama, Texas and California. He taught high school and held progressive positions of teaching and administration at Freed-Hardeman and Pepperdine universities. His final ministry was to his co-residents at Franklin Park Sonterra in San Antonio.

John was a devoted father and loving husband. He will be lovingly remembered by children Davida Lambert (Lew), Scot Hollingsworth (Sara), Philip Hollingsworth; grandchildren Julie, Craig, Lisa, David, Elizabeth, Megan, Evan and Christopher; eight great-grandchildren; brother Frank Hollingsworth (Joanne); and sister Sandra Hollingsworth.

John was predeceased by his wife, Davida, parents James and Cora, and sister Connie Scott. Memorial donations can be made to SA Hope Center, PO Box 780904, San Antonio, TX 78278 / sahopecenter.org.



Bruce McGrew 1970-2022

Bruce McGrew, 51, of Corning, Ark., passed away at his home Feb. 14, 2022.

Bruce was born on Dec. 1, 1970, in Pocahontas, Ark. He was the minister for the Success Church of Christ in Arkansas and was passionate about spreading God's word. He was also the technology director for Neelyville School District R4 in Neelyville, Mo., and loved working on computers.

He was an avid St. Louis Cardinals

Continued on Page 29

NEWSMAKERS



CALLIE NALL STARKIE

The McCarthy family, who attend the Landmark Church of Christ in Montgomery, Ala., recently adopted their fourth child after fostering her for 625 days. McKenzie Kate McCarthy has lived with the McCarthy family since she was two days old. "I am amazed by the faithfulness of God — his promises fulfilled in our lives and his provision for this precious girl!" Katie Beth McCarthy wrote on Facebook.



Todd

HIRED: Elliot Hamm as the minister for the Lebanon Church of Christ in Mayfield, Ky. Hamm previously was minister for the Flatrock Church of Christ in Hohenwald, Tenn. **Chuck Morris** as minister for the Spring Meadows Church of Christ in Spring Hill, Tenn. **Dillan Todd** as the children's minister for the Lebanon Road Church of Christ in Nashville, Tenn.



Bundy

APPOINTED: DeeDee Bundy, Albert Gillespie and Al Smith to the board of trustees at Lubbock Christian University in Texas. Smith served on the board from 2003 to 2015 before being reappointed in December 2021. **BJ Morris** and **James Lashlee** as deacons at the Lebanon Road Church of Christ in Nashville, Tenn.



Gillespie

RETIRED: Darrell Blankenship from pulpit minister at the Green Hill Church of Christ in Mount Juliet, Tenn.



Blankenship

Milestones, continued
fan, enjoyed duck hunting, working on cars, and spending time on his lawn tractor. Bruce was a family man and loved spending time with his wife, sons, extended family and friends.

On April 17, 1992, he married Brenda Roark, who survives. They would have celebrated their 30th wedding anniversary in April. Other survivors include their sons Drake and Jaxon McGrew of the home; mother Helen McGrew of Success; brother Jim (Angie) McGrew of Corning; sister Mary Helen (Jim) Mullinnax of Mt. Carmel, Ill.; mother-in-law, Wanda Roark of McDougal; sister-in-laws, Karla Newboles and Leanna Glasgow of McDougal; several nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends including a loving church congregation.

Memorials may be made to Bubba's Place Preschool, 710 9th St. Corning, AR 72422 or Noah's Ark Preschool, 500 W 4th St, Corning, AR 72422.



Harry Risinger 1946-2022

Harry B. Risinger Jr., 75, of Collierville, Tenn., passed away on Jan. 31, 2022.

He was born Aug. 28, 1946, in El Dorado, Ark., to Harry B. Risinger, Sr. and Amanda Risinger.

Harry's family moved to Searcy, Ark., in 1955 on his ninth birthday, and he lived there until 1968. He attended Harding Academy in Searcy, graduating in 1964. He then attended college at Harding University, graduating in 1968 with a bachelor's in accounting. He earned a Master of Business Administration degree from Memphis State



University in 1974 and became a certified public accountant.

Harry was introduced by mutual friends to the love of his life, the former Janice (Jan) Robinson. Harry and Jan were married on June 6, 1970. Together, they had two sons, Matt and Adam.

After graduating from college, Harry enlisted in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War. In total, he served three years, including a short stint in Vietnam. He was then stationed at the Pine Bluff Arsenal where he completed his service.

Harry joined W.R. Grace and company in 1972 as a junior analyst in the agricultural chemicals group. Among his accomplishments were being named group Chief Financial Officer and corporate Vice President. Subsequently, he became President and Chief Executive Officer for Seminole Fertilizer Corporation.

In 1993 Harry changed careers and began working as a financial advisor. He ultimately retired after an additional 16 years with the title of First Vice President of the Memphis branch of Morgan Stanley.

Harry served as an elder at the Millington Church of Christ in Tennessee for over 25 years. He taught Bible classes for youths and adults. Harry was a member of the Board of Trustees of Harding University for 32 years, including serving a term as the chairman. He was a board member for Agape Child and Family Services, Truth for Today World Mission School and *The Christian Chronicle*.

Harry is survived by his wife of 51 years, Jan, sons Matt and Adam Risinger, daughters-in-law Julie and Jessica Risinger, grandchildren Alyssa, Aniston, Noah, and Eli Risinger, sisters Linda Stanley and Amanda (Mandy) Jones, and many other dearly loved family and friends.

Please consider a memorial gift to Children's Homes Inc. in Paragould, Ark., or Harding School of Theology in Memphis, Tenn.

WITH APPRECIATION: *The Christian Chronicle* appreciates gifts received in honor of Gordon and Irene Wallace and in memory of Geneva Crum, Leslie Daugherty, Yong Kimball, Laura A. Walker, Dorothy Carpenter Wells, Pete Yirsa and Donna Youngblood.

Nina Clayton Robinson 1925-2021

Nina Clayton Robinson peacefully entered into her heavenly rest at home on Oct. 30, 2021, at the age of 96.

She is survived by her children Rob Robinson (Marcia) of Nolensville, Tenn.; Harriette Flanagin of Augusta, Ga.; Leslie Landiss (Shipley) of Nashville, Tenn.; grandchildren Greenlee Flanagin, Jr. (Annie), Zack Robinson (Esther), Clay Flanagin (Jessica), Molly Kincaid (Andrew), Clayton Landiss (Kristin), Robert Landiss; eight great-grandchildren; and sister-in-law Nancy Holmes (Buchanan, Mich.).

She was preceded in death by her husband of 71 years, Roy Robinson, son-in-law Greenlee Flanagin, and granddaughter, Hilary Robinson.

A native of Ponzer, N.C., she was the youngest of seven children. A devoted wife and mother, she was known and loved as "Amma" by her children and grandchildren, and as "Miss Nina" by her beloved church family and a host of caregivers. She was also known for her loving spirit, kind heart and her wry sense of humor that was present to the end. She was also an example of unconditional love to all she met. To know Nina was to know the spirit of Jesus.

Her family wishes to thank all the wonderful women who cared for Miss Nina and Mr. Roy in the last years of their lives. You gave us peace and comfort knowing how much you loved them.

A memorial service was conducted Nov. 14 at Central Church of Christ in Augusta, Ga. Memorials may be sent to World Christian Broadcasting, 605 Bradley Court, Franklin, TN 37067 or Ponzer Volunteer Fire and Rescue, 40186 US Hwy 264 E, Belhaven, NC 27810.



Full-time Minister Search - Virginia

The **Williamsburg Church of Christ**, located in **Williamsburg, Virginia**, is seeking a full-time minister. We are a diverse, loving congregation with three elders, 14 deacons and about 100 members serving the historic Greater Williamsburg area. You can find information about the congregation on our website, williamsburgcoc.org, and on our Facebook page. Those wanting more information or to find the application can do so at:

wccministersearch.org

Dynamic Minister/Evangelist

The West Side Church of Christ in Searcy, Ark., is seeking a seasoned and dynamic minister/evangelist to serve in the role of pulpit minister and as a member of a full-time, four-person ministerial team. Information about the congregation can be found online at:

wschurch.net

Submit current resume and vitae online at:
tinyurl.com/wsministersearch
or mail to:

West Side Church of Christ, Minister Search
702 West Center Ave, Searcy, AR 72143
The deadline for submission is March 31.

Preacher - Versailles, Ky.

The Versailles Church of Christ is looking for a full-time preaching minister to serve in a family-oriented, Bible-centered fellowship. Our congregation is a small yet warm and welcoming group. Our goal is to be faithful to God, to love one another, and to share the Good News and practical expressions of God's love and grace for the lost and hurting people in our community.

For more information, please visit our website: vcofc.org
To contact us, please write to:
elders@vcofc.org

Minister Search - Texas

Pulpit minister needed for a small-town Church of Christ. Ideal candidate will have second source of income. Must believe in First Century church doctrine. Candidate may also be asked to teach classes. Please send resume and references to:

Ingliside Church of Christ
PO Box 430, Ingliside, TX 78362
ingcoc@yahoo.com

Only the most qualified applicants will be invited to preach a sample lesson with pay and per diem.

Pulpit Minister - New Mexico

Mayhill Church of Christ, a small (30 member/ no elder) acappella congregation, located in the beautiful Lincoln National Forest in southern N.M., is seeking a pulpit minister who is knowledgeable in the scriptures to preach scripturally sound sermons and teach biblically sound Bible classes. Must be willing to teach the truth on controversial topics with love, compassion, and humbleness. This is an independent contractor position. Compensation is negotiable. Will reimburse up to \$5,000 for relocation expenses. Contact: Bobby Moberly (575) 973-8476 or Larry Dockray (575) 635-5936. Email resumes to mayhillcoc@outlook.com.

Part-time Evangelist - Airway Heights, Wash.

Some duties and Responsibilities: • Preach 1-2 times per month • Teach Bible class for either adult or youth for 9 months of calendar year • Evangelize • Lead weekly Life Group discussion • Work with the young adults and youth. **Compensation:** \$1500/month (will reimburse up to \$7000 in allowable relocation expenses) **This is strictly a part-time position.** The candidate will need to find other gainful employment in Spokane. Visit our website at: westsidecofc.org. Send resumes and references to:

psnewbill@yahoo.com or
Westside Church of Christ
PO Box 1243, Airway Heights, WA 99001

Full-time Preaching Minister - Keizer, Oregon

The **Keizer Church of Christ** is looking for a full-time preaching minister to serve in a family-oriented, Bible-based fellowship. Our congregation is a warm and welcoming group. Rooted in God's holy Word, you'll find a devotion to God that can be seen in our love towards one another, eagerness to serve our community, prayer life, and devotion to our children's development.

For more information about the job or to apply,
please visit our website or contact us at:

website: keizercoc.org/position-preaching-minister/
phone or email: (503) 393-5424, keizercc@comcast.net

Full-time Evangelist - Norfolk, Nebraska

The Norfolk Church of Christ is looking for a full-time evangelist. Applicants should be a graduate of a Bible college or school of preaching and/or have 5 years of preaching experience. Duties will include, but are not limited to: finding ways to seek and save the lost, helping to train the saints for the work of service, preaching, teaching Bible classes, and visiting members of the congregation. Our minister of 22 years is retiring in August. The church was planted in 1963. We have been blessed with unity and the ability to financially support the preachers of the gospel. We have approximately 80 members who love the Lord, each other, and the lost. We have three elders and one deacon. Norfolk has a population of 24,000 and is the business hub of Northeast Nebraska. The Norfolk Church of Christ is the only Church of Christ in a 45-mile radius.

You can check out our website, norfolkcofc.com, or the **Norfolk Church of Christ Facebook page**. Applicants should send inquiries, resumes, and a video (or link to online video) of teaching/preaching to jschippercoc@yahoo.com or mail to: **The Norfolk Church of Christ, Attn: Search Committee, PO Box 137, Norfolk, NE 68701.**

Full-time Minister Search-Jackson, Mich.

Higby Street Church of Christ is seeking a full-time experienced minister. We are a diverse and loving congregation with two elders and two deacons. Candidate must possess sound biblical knowledge along with teaching experience. Interested candidates, please contact our elders at:

ministry@higbystcoc.org

Higby Street Church of Christ
Attn: Search Committee
706 S Higby St
Jackson, MI 49203

Michigan church seeks Associate Minister

The Church of Christ at Grand Ledge, 5 miles west of Lansing, is searching for an Associate Minister to work beside the present evangelist, Bill Horton. The Elders' goal is that he become the full-time evangelist. Candidate has the dedication, commitment and support of the present evangelist to work together in evangelism and congregational spiritual development. Church is financially sound, comprised of mature Christians, and is a solid, NT congregation. **Interested parties contact Bill Horton, whorton414@comcast.net / (517) 712-5121. <https://cocogl.net/>**

CALENDAR

March 4-5 Affirming the Faith Seminar. Surviving The Tough Stuff. Oklahoma City. See affirmingthefaihtok.com.

March 5 Acappella 40th Anniversary Reunion Concert. Dallas. See acappella.ticketspice.com/acappella-40th-anniversary-reunion-concert.

March 18-19 40th Annual IHCF Medical Missions Seminar. See ihcf.net/seminar.

March 19-20 Acappella SongFest. Georgetown, S.C. See acappella.org/events-calendar/.

March 23-26 Revive Us Again. HomeMission Evangelism Workshop. Waxahachie, Texas. See homemission.org.

March 25-26 Women of Hope Weekend (HHI). Murfreesboro, Tenn. See hhi.org/womenofhope.

March 27 Prestoncrest 50th Anniversary. See prestoncrest.org.

March 28-31 Abundant Living. Retreat for senior adults. Gatlinburg, Tenn. See abundantlivingseniors.com.

March 31-April 1 ACU's Summit Event: Seeking Hope, Finding Joy. See acu.edu/summit.

April 25-28 SOAR: Seniors Overcoming and Recharging Retreat. See heraldoftruth.org/SOAR.

May 3-6 Pepperdine University Lectureship. See go.pepperdine.edu/harbor-cc.

June 3-5 Men's Advance Conference-Herald of Truth. See heraldoftruth.org/advance.

June 6-10 Global Reunion. Annual Camp for TCKs and families. Oklahoma City. See oc.edu/globalreunion.

June 8-10 48th National Jail and Prison Ministry Workshop. Wichita Falls, Texas. Contact 2022prisonworkshop@gmail.com.

FULL CALENDAR: christianchronicle.org

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Upcoming deadlines are:

Mar. 18 and April 15

Contact: advertising@christianchronicle.org

Preaching to be heard: Why it matters so much

Preaching has never been easy. God sent Jeremiah to deliver a hard message with little assurance: “They will not listen to you. ... They will not hear you” (Jeremiah 7:27). God knew the hearts of Jeremiah’s hearers would not be open to his voice. He also knew other voices were saying other things.

Paul was still optimistic about preaching: “How shall they hear without someone preaching?” (Romans 10:14). The 3,000 who listened on the Day of Pentecost give reason for hope (Acts 2).

Still, preaching remains a challenge. There are people who will not hear. And there remain other voices saying other things. Today’s preachers compete with podcasters, bloggers and instant fact checkers. Add to that the steady stream of moral failures by too many religious leaders, and it is easy to understand why people struggle to listen.

No matter the topic — politics, health, weather — multiple voices scream for attention. Anyone with an opinion and a computer has a right and a platform to share their perspective. In the marketplace of ideas, the shelves are overstocked, and shoppers are overwhelmed.

Views



Jeremie Beller

Even worse, people are unsure who to trust. It is a matter of credibility. Political leaders, media personalities, even religious voices regularly contradict each other. Scandal and suspicion only add to the confusion.

Before entering the pulpit, our credibility is suspect. Why should they listen? And how do we cut through the noise?

“Watch your life and doctrine closely” remains a solid starting point (1 Timothy 4:16). Imagine Paul’s words if Timothy had social media. Fair or unfair, news of any moral failing of any religious leader threatens the voice of every preacher. Listeners eagerly search for signs that the faith

we preach means enough for us to follow it ourselves.

What credibility we do earn should be used wisely. The urge to comment on every news story or cultural skirmish weakens our voice. Will people listen to hear us on weightier matters if we exhaust them with our views on lesser matters?

And when the moment demands comment, our words must carry the unique voice of the Gospel. If our words are no different from those of nonbelievers, then they are simply redundant.

We should fight the temptation of speaking too much. The concern goes beyond the length of our sermons. Social media, blogs and YouTube offer endless opportunities for being heard. Each can be a blessing, but they also risk overexposure. People who talk too much are often heard too little.

The goal of preaching is not simply to speak the truth, but to speak in a way to be heard. Strategic and focused use of our voice reduces the

chance of getting lost in the noise of an over-messaged culture.

When we are granted an audience, we must deliver something meaningful. Life is filled with uncertainty and doubt. Honest people are looking for hope, something to hold on to, somewhere solid to stand.

Preaching should never intentionally deepen our doubts. Preaching is a time to share convictions, not questions, assurances, not assumptions.

For a short moment on Sunday, the competing voices are quieted, and the people of God await a word from the Lord.

Preachers are invited and even commanded to offer that word, a more compelling and a more certain voice. God helps us have something to say and the credibility with which to say it.

JEREMIE BELLER is opinions editor of *The Christian Chronicle*. He is congregational minister for the Wilshire Church of Christ in Oklahoma City. Contact jeremie@christianchronicle.org.

TO OUR READERS

Where have all the churches gone?

Based on records maintained by 21st Century Christian, roughly 200 Churches of Christ in the U.S. closed between 2014 and 2021.

These congregations encompassed every region of the country. They were urban and rural. They spanned the conservative-to-progressive continuum.

The trend began in the 1990s and has accelerated in recent decades. More than a pandemic is at work here.

Where have all the churches gone?

A *Christian Chronicle* special project that I’m leading will seek answers to that question. We’ll report on the who, what and why of churches’ demise. We’ll give special attention to where the people have gone and what has happened to church property and assets.

Several scholars — people such as Richard Hughes, Stan Granberg and Jack Reese — have written about the changing theologies and sociology that may have precipitated

this decline. Their work provides valuable context.

But what has happened to the churches — to the people who used to populate the pews and to the pews and the buildings that housed them?

Answering these questions is important and complicated. The number of churches affected almost certainly is higher than those identified by 21st Century Christian; forwarding addresses are hard to come by. But their story is important, not just for them, but for us.

Our team asks this of *Chronicle* readers who know of a congregation that has closed permanently or plans to do so: Email details to correspondent Cheryl Mann Bacon at cheryl@christianchronicle.org.

If you prefer, write to us at P.O. Box 11000, Oklahoma City, OK 73136-1100.

Thank you for reading and supporting the *Chronicle!* — **Cheryl Mann Bacon, correspondent**



NEW AND NOTEWORTHY

Made for a Purpose

Debbie L. Cole.

Made For A Purpose: Lessons From My Sheepdogs.

Xulon Press, 2021. \$20.49. Order from iamasheep.net.



Careening Towards Grace

Kenny Noble Cortes.

Culture Jock: One Foot in the World, One Foot in the Church.

Xulon Press, 2022. Paperback \$29.99, eBook \$9.99. Order from culturejock.net/shop.



Awaken Your Deepest Gratitude

Michael Floissac.

Thank You! With Deepest Gratitude.

Outskirts Press, 2021. \$18.00. Print and ebook. Order from Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and Outskirts Press.

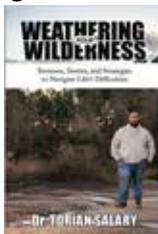


Weather Life's Toughest Challenges

Dr. Torian Salary.

Weathering Your Wilderness. Self-published, 2022.

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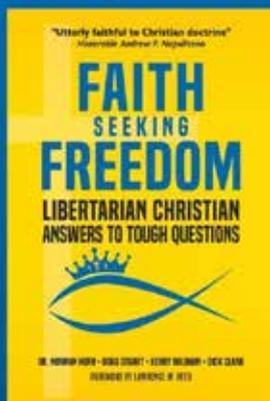
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Dr. Gary Smith Sr. **Marriage After the Honeymoon.** Self-published, 2022. \$15.00. Order from Amazon.



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COVID-19 Checklist

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Ernie Bueno, Saturn Road Church of Christ, Garland, Texas

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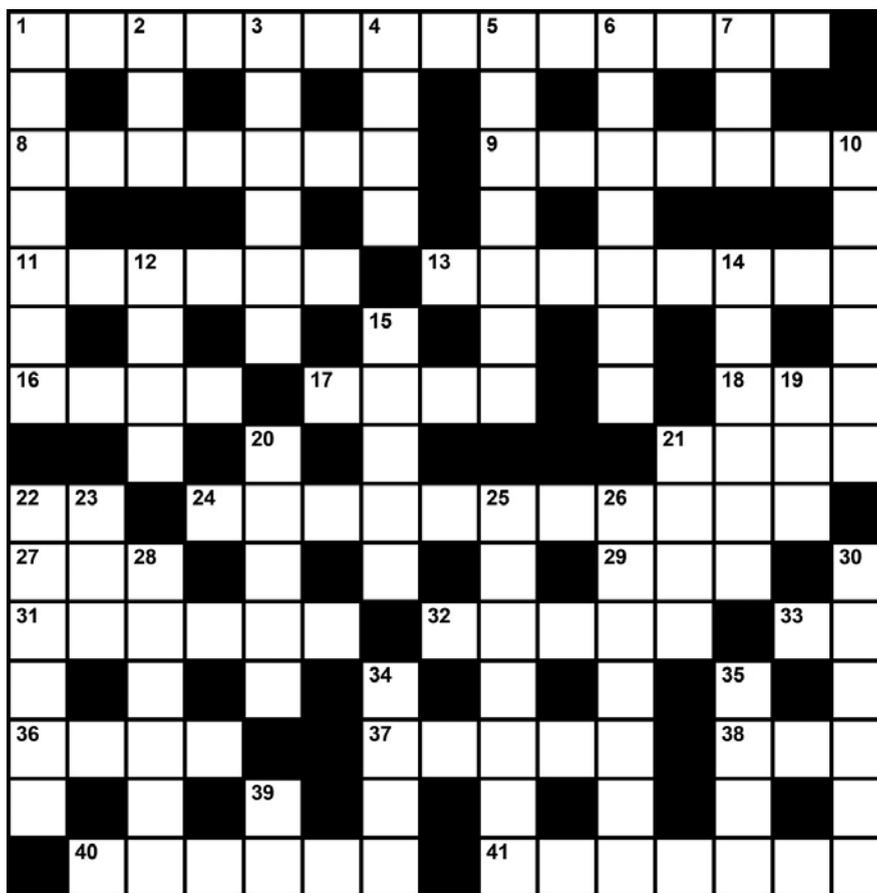


The Christian Chronicle Crossword

By Myles Mellor | www.ilovecrosswords.com

ACROSS

1. In Exodus 3:1, Moses saw this, three words.
8. One of the disciples.
9. "During the night the _____ was revealed to Daniel in a vision" (Daniel 2:19, New International Version)
11. Place of worship.
13. Old Testament prophet.
16. "He has filled them with skill to do all kinds of work as engravers, designers, embroiderers in blue, purple and scarlet _____ and fine linen ..." (Exodus 35:35, NIV).
17. "... because wisdom is better than precious _____ and nothing you desire can compare to it." (Proverbs 8:11, International Standard Version)
18. "You are not to steal or _____ or deal falsely with your neighbor" (Leviticus 19:11, ISV).
21. Allergy reaction, sometimes.
22. Thing referred to.
24. "My son Solomon is young and inexperienced. The temple that will be built for the Lord is to be _____ ... so I will complete preparations for it" (1 Chronicles 22:5, ISV).
27. Galilee is one.
29. Directed.
31. One of the disciples.
32. "For the person who has died has been _____ from sin" (Romans 6:7, ISV).
33. Circle ratio.
36. Area of land.
37. Biblical word for killed.
38. Not operating.
40. "I'll _____ above the tops of the clouds; I'll make myself like the Most High" (Isaiah 14:14, ISV).
41. "... you will be generously granted



entry into the _____ kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Messiah" (2 Peter 1:11, ISV).

DOWN

1. He was Paul's companion during his travels (Acts 16:6).
2. Have some food.
3. "You be my judge, God, and plead my case against an _____ nation ..." (Psalm 43:1).
4. In the Bible this is often referred to as "tidings."
5. Bible book that relates the story

6. of Israel's journey from Mount Sinai to the plains of Moab.
7. "And he said, I _____ thee, shew me they glory" (Exodus 33:16, King James Version).
7. Observe.
10. A name of God.
12. Another companion of Paul.
14. "He shall deliver the _____ of the innocent: and it is delivered by the pureness of thine hands" (Job 22:30, KJV).
15. Garbanzos and limas.
19. Doctrine adherent (suffix).
20. One of the disciples.

BIBLE BOWLING

The 'I's have it

THE ANSWER TO EACH of the following begins with the letter "I."

1. Son of Abram and Hagar.
2. Son of Abraham and Sarah.
3. Latin name for Edom.
4. Nomadic slave traders who took Joseph to Egypt.
5. Paul hoped to travel to Spain via _____.
6. "Smallest" Greek letter.
7. Son of Aaron.
8. Father of Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz.
9. Son of Jacob and Leah.
10. The national name adopted for the Kingdom of Jeroboam.

Bonus A: Paul, Sylvanus (Silas) and Timothy wrote two letters to which church?

B: To whom did John write his third letter?

Quiz by Steve Whitehead of the British Bible School, britishbibleschool.com.

ANSWERS, crossword solution on Page 38.

21. Marsh plant.
22. Old Testament prophet.
23. Number of commandments
25. "... if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ _____ you, so also do ye" (Colossians 3:13).
26. "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity and _____ me from sin" (Psalm 51:2).
28. Decorates.
30. Wicked.
34. Employed.
35. "Today your Savior, the Lord Messiah, was _____ in the City of David" (Luke 2:11, ISV).
39. _____, the people ...

Word Find: A message to Timothy

By Betty Hollister | The Christian Chronicle

GENTLENESS SEALISTENINGTUNGNIDNATSREDNULARUTPIRCS
 INVESTMENTDUNFDOCTRINEYUHTENAITSIRHCOHRIGHTEOUSO
 GNREJOICEOYAUTOIERUTATS IUOIMPUTESSRRTNUYNENHOWYUC
 AITALENTLDOECOOLONCURROALTYSELSUOFTNEYAYLRDEPOIR
 AIFPSEFOYSSONNLRLAESOBGRURSNRRHTUEAIOOAUVGUDHHON
 TTIEERIOSNFTIMSTFLNTUGTI IUTYENISGEKATIDEITUINICN
 RNATRDAEUNARITTOISOIFGEIRIRSEULLGODEOTSESRUNUENVA
 PITTCITAMARDEEDERCASRSOESREVEILEBAPTISMERCIFUL

Find the following words about study and habits. The unused 34 letters form a piece of advice from Paul in 2 Timothy 2. (Find the answer on Page 38.)

- ADORATION
- ANGEL
- ANNOUNCE
- AUDIENCE
- BAPTISM
- BELIEVERS
- BREAKFAST
- CAUSES
- CHRISTIAN
- CLASSES
- DOCTRINE
- DRAMATIC
- EDUCATE
- ETERNITY
- EVENTUALLY
- FRIENDS
- FRUITFUL
- GENTLENESS
- GRACIOUS
- HONORED
- HUNGER
- IMPUTES
- INTERESTS
- INVESTMENT
- LAUGHING
- LEARNING
- LISTENING
- LONGINGLY
- MERCIFUL
- NATIONS
- NEIGHBOR
- NURSES
- NUTRITION
- PETITION
- PRAYERFUL
- REJOICE
- RIGHTEOUS
- RUINS
- SACRED
- SATISFY
- SCRIPTURAL
- SISTERHOOD
- SPIRITUAL
- STATURE
- STORY
- STUDIOUS
- TALENT
- TESTIMONY
- UNDERSTANDING
- USEFUL
- VERITY
- VERSES
- VICTORIOUS
- YOUTHFUL

You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others. — 2 Timothy 2:1-2, NIV

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Book applies 'ethics beyond rules' to abortion, race and more

Keith D. Stanglin's "Ethics Beyond Rules: How Christ's Call to Love Informs Our Moral Choices" is an excellent, popular-level introduction to Christian ethics.

Unlike some similar books, it does not pretend to offer decisive answers. Instead, it is an aid for carefully thinking through sometimes complex and troubling ethical dilemmas.

According to Stanglin, professor of theology at Heritage Christian University in Florence, Ala., and director of the Center for Christian Studies in Austin, Texas, rules are necessary but not intrinsically sufficient for living an ethical life. The true goal for Christians is to imitate God. While rules are necessary in a fallen world, they become less necessary as people adopt the mind of Christ more perfectly and are animated by love of God and neighbor.

"Ethics Beyond Rules" pursues its

thesis in two major sections. Part 1 includes five chapters addressing foundational considerations like the existence of right and wrong and the reasons and motivations for pursuing "good." It commends love as the proper touchstone for Christian ethics and presents Scripture as the principal guide in ethical matters.

For Stanglin, tradition and reason are aids to the teachings of Scripture, essential for making proper application of Bible texts to contemporary challenges. He explains, "if Scripture seems to be saying X, and it is supported by Christian tradition, and it does not contradict reason, then that's a pretty solid case."

Part 2 includes a series of discussions illustrating the approach outlined in Part 1. Each chapter surveys a category of ethical problem by explaining the current social landscape, presenting the testimony of Scripture, describing the relevant Christian tradition and attempting

to apply reason. Like most ethics books, it tackles sexual ethics, homosexuality, sexual practice and abortion. It also treats some matters that others do not, including the use of technology, politics and identity and race.

"Ethics Beyond Rules" is not exhaustive. It does not deal with some topics that readers might expect — like capital punishment, civil disobedience and war. Given the book's design and target audience, this is expected. Selections regarding topics and depth were understandably necessary in order to maintain a manageable size for non-expert readers. Still, a brief list of suggested readings to facilitate further investigation would have been helpful additions to the individual chapters.

This book is a good primer for individuals and groups wanting

to think seriously about Christian ethics because it introduces

concepts and questions. Each chapter includes discussion questions, and the book can easily be covered in a typical quarter of congregational study. Readers who are uninitiated in ethical studies will find explanations of key terms, relatable anecdotes, familiar examples and prominent Scripture references.

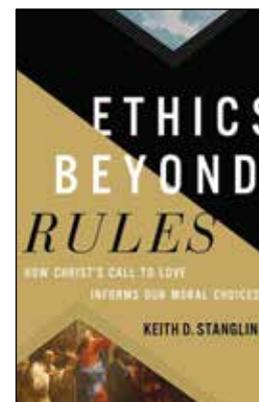
Yet, people who are familiar with the basics are likely to be challenged to embrace higher motivations for positions they may already hold because Stanglin calls readers to something more than rule-keeping — applying the divine ethic of love in every situation.

MELVIN L. OTEY is an associate professor of law for Faulkner University in Montgomery, Ala. He preaches for Churches of Christ and speaks at ministry events.

In Print



Melvin L. Otey



Keith D. Stanglin.
Ethics Beyond Rules.
Zondervan, 2021. 256 pages. \$26.99.

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Meat Loaf: Singer who 'would do anything for love' had connections to Churches of Christ

Before Meat Loaf's debut album sold 44 million copies and became one of the best-selling albums of all time, he was an active member of the Walnut Hill Church of Christ in Dallas and later attended Lubbock Christian University, which is associated with Churches of Christ.

The singer, born Marvin Lee Aday, died Jan. 20. He was 74. Known for arena rock anthems including 1993's "I'd Do Anything for Love (But I Won't Do That)," he also appeared in more than 50 movies and TV shows.

His grandfather, David Lee Hukel, was a minister who preached in multiple towns in Texas. Later, his mother, Wilma, would make sure he was raised in a Christian environment.

In 1964, J. Terry Johnson, future president of Oklahoma Christian University, became the first youth minister at the Walnut Hill church.

He remembered Marvin, known to everyone at the time as M.L., attending Bible class and worship every Sunday. He played on the football team at Thomas Jefferson High School with several others from the youth group. Terry later assisted minister Hardeman Nichols in officiating the funeral for M.L.'s mother.

He attended then-Lubbock Christian College in the fall of 1965. His mother died in 1967. He began acting and released his debut album in 1977.

David Heflin, minister for the Woodward Church of Christ in Oklahoma, recalled an encounter with Meat Loaf in 1994. The rock star came to Valley View, Texas, a small town near the Oklahoma border, to film the video for the song "Objects in the Rear View Mirror May Appear Closer Than They Are." One scene for the video was filmed at a house that belonged to an elder of the

Valley View Church of Christ. Heflin believes this was a coincidence, and there was no relationship between Aday and the elder.

Over the years Meat Loaf provided conflicting stories about the origin of his stage name. Members of the Walnut Hill church knew him as M.L. In 1978, he told *People* magazine that he adopted the name to "save his devout Church of Christ kin from embarrassment."

In 2012 Meat Loaf was interviewed by *Pop Matters*. The magazine reported that he "does not belong to any faith-based institution" but that he "studied the Bible, which continues to influence his work." He said in the interview, "I'll be honest with you. I pray every night, and if I skip a night, I apologize for skipping it. ... I thank (God) for my blessings because I've been very blessed."

Religious themes are sprinkled throughout Meat Loaf's work. However, a few songs and images from his career may make some

Playlist



Scott Elliott



LUBBOCK CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY/VIDEO STILL VIA YOUTUBE

Marvin "M.L." Aday, known to the world as Meat Loaf, attended Lubbock Christian College in 1965.

Christians uncomfortable.

In a social media post just after Meat Loaf's death, Anglican priest Malcolm Guite recounted his time working with "hardcore bikers" who were die-hard Meat Loaf fans. Guite once was asked if it would be OK to play Meat Loaf's signature "Bat Out of Hell" at a funeral.

He paused and replied, "Yes, definitely. The bat is flying in the right direction."

SCOTT ELLIOTT is minister for the La Grange Church of Christ in Texas.

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The Cedar Hill Church of Christ is a Christian fellowship of approximately 175 members located in southwest Dallas County and whose mission is to *Be a Family Where All People Find Peace and Purpose in Jesus Christ*. Additional information can be obtained by contacting the minister search committee at: preachersearch@chcoc.org.

(972) 291-4200, 535 S Clark Rd, Cedar Hill, TX 75104



ERIK TRYGGESTAD

Will Norrid teaches a class in Loyd Auditorium at Freed-Hardeman University.

Grow the church by doing good

HENDERSON, Tenn.

Jesus' reputation for doing good preceded him. Can Churches of Christ say the same?

"I don't know that that is the initial response people always have when we talk about the Lord's church," said Will Norrid, who preaches for the Lebanon Church of Christ in Dresden, a small town in west Tennessee.

I attended his class, the first of a three-part series, "Growing the Church by Doing Good," during this year's Bible lectures at Freed-Hardeman University.

The class was a rare gem found behind a mustard-gold curtain in Loyd Auditorium. The folks at Freed use those curtains to section off the balcony into four classrooms for concurrent classes. As we flipped to the story of Cornelius in Acts 10, the voice of Dan Winkler boomed through the curtain from his session in the auditorium below. Norrid called it "brother Dan's bonus content."

Cornelius, a centurion, had a vision from God and called for the apostle Peter. Though he was a Gentile, the soldier already was familiar with "what has happened throughout the province of Judea," as Peter said in verse 37. Cornelius certainly didn't know as much as most Jews did about God, but he seemed to know about Jesus' good deeds.

Norrid also pointed to the Old Testament story of Ruth, whose kindness toward her mother-in-law Naomi was known by her entire community including Boaz, her future husband.

"I love the scripture," Norrid said. "I know you do, too. You wouldn't be here on a Tuesday morning if you didn't."

Insight



Erik Tryggestad

But before Christians can "get to the depths of Scripture" with those who don't know Jesus, they must be "known as people who live it," he said.

"If we don't get that right, it doesn't matter in one sense if we get all the correct doctrine, the correct teaching ... straight out of the New Testament, just like the first century church.

"If we could restore it perfectly in our manner of worship, in our method of life, in our approach to mission work, in the way we raise funds, all that would be for naught if we are not known as people who do good."

I made sure to come back the next day for the second session, taught by Taylor Bell, a preacher and Licensed Professional Counselor who works with at-risk youths. He focused on the question, "Who do we help?" Namely, that would be those who *love* God, those who *loathe* God and those who *lack* God, Bell said.

Every sermon at Freed-Hardeman should have three points that start with the same letter, by the way. It's something the preaching students got from Billy R. Smith, who taught Bible at Freed for 47 years. I went to a dinner honoring Smith during the lectures. It was part heartfelt tribute and part comic roast. It was awesome.

ERIK TRYGGESTAD is president and CEO of *The Christian Chronicle*. Contact erik@christianchronicle.org, and follow him on Twitter @eriktryggestad.

FINANCIAL HELP NEEDED - Help us continue the work in Dubois, Wy.

The Church of Christ in Dubois, Wyoming, was established by the mission work of Stanley Shipp in the 1960s. The congregation has had growth over the years, with several talented ministers, and has been blessed with support from churches in the south. Gordon Lindley is the current minister in Dubois. The Dubois church is in serious need of additional financial support. The congregation has suffered a great "blow" over the last eight plus months with deaths and moves of members. Harry Leseberg, whose family and extended family goes back to the start of this congregation, died with COVID-19. Please consider giving to the Dubois church in order for the Word of God to continue to go forth in the community. The Dubois Church Family are a very amazing group of brothers and sisters.

Please contact us for further information:

Dubois Church of Christ, PO Box 67, Dubois, WY 82513

Please call or email us for more information. Office: (307) 455-3124,

Ken Brewster: (307) 349-0617, Gordon Lindley: (210) 288-7385, gb.lindley@att.net



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Crossword | From Page 34



Bible Bowling | From Page 34

- 1) Ishmael (Genesis 16).
 - 2) Isaac (Genesis 21).
 - 3) Idumaea.
 - 4) Ishmaelites (Genesis 37).
 - 5) Italy (Romans 15).
 - 6) Iota.
 - 7) Ithamar (Exodus 6)
 - 8) Isaiah (Isaiah 8).
 - 9) Issachar (Genesis 30)
 - 10) Israel (1 Kings 12).
- Bonus A)** Thessalonica.
- Bonus B)** Gaius.

Word Search | From Page 35

The unused 34 letters read: "STUDY TO SHOW YOURSELF APPROVED UNTO GOD."

Full-Time Evangelist Needed in Minnesota

The Mankato Church of Christ in Mankato, Minn., is looking for a full-time minister to serve in southern Minnesota. We are a congregation of approximately fifty members overseen by two elders. Additionally, we have a vocational ministry program to recruit young Christians to live in Mankato and work with the church. Applicants should possess sound biblical knowledge, have a degree in ministry or a similar field or preaching experience, and good interpersonal skills. Duties would include, but are not limited to: pulpit preaching, Bible class teaching, community building, and outreach activities. Salary and benefits are negotiable and commensurate with experience.

Located in the rapidly growing largest city in southern Minnesota, we have a lot to offer! Mankato is 1.5 hours from the large metropolis of Minneapolis/St. Paul, with countless restaurants, stores, and industries. The closest international airport is conveniently located a little over an hour away, with a bus service running straight from the heart of town to the airport. The city of Mankato itself has a population of over 100,000 and is also home to a large contingent of college students. With a large state university in town, we have all the benefits of a college town and all the amenities of a large suburb. One of the biggest attractions is a ski resort located right outside of town, boasting months of some of the best slope time in Minnesota. Other popular activities include exploring the many nearby state parks and the 10,000+ lakes that offer everything from boating to ice fishing.

All interested applicants should submit a resume, references, and a video of a recent sermon to the elders at this address:

k.nill@outlook.com

For more information, please see our website:

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Beaumont Church of Christ

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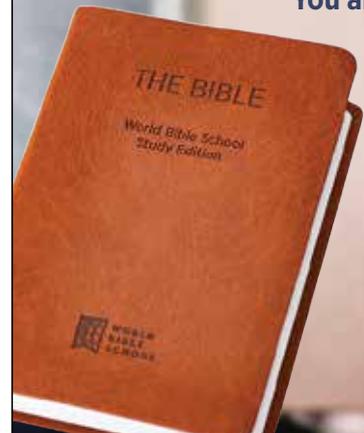
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