

VISIONS



Dec '05 / Jan '06

Pooling Resources...Working Together

By Patrick Anderson,
CBF Global Missions Advocate

I CANNOT REMEMBER A YEAR so chock-full of unanticipated disasters. Just a year ago Georgia was reeling from four hurricanes which came through Florida and the Gulf Coast into Georgia. Ivan brought incredible destruction, but do you remember the names of the other major hurricanes?

Then, that year ended and a new year began with the shocking Indian Ocean Tsunami which engulfed untold numbers of persons, striking terror and a sense of tragedy throughout the world. It seems so long ago now. Yet, many people are still in extreme difficulty and grief, many still without homes or means of livelihood, and many more in spiritual despair.



While we were still struggling to respond to those events, Hurricane Katrina surprised us all as she overwhelmed New Orleans and the Mississippi Gulf coast. Rita came soon after but seemed tame to our beleaguered senses. Do we even

remember the name of the devastating hurricane that soon after swept through the Yucatan Peninsula and Mexico? Have we paid any attention to the floods ravaging Central America? Still, many other calamities of war, impoverishment, enslavement, and disease destroy lives in places we rarely hear of.

Now, before the year is ended, we are seeing earthquake carnage too terrible to think of in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Television images show the bodies of schoolchildren crushed beneath the rubble, grieving parents, and overwhelmed relief personnel. I feel exhausted, drained of emotion. My spiritual cupboard is bare. We all have sensory overload, our pain threshold flooded.

Yet, upon reflection I recognize that God is working among us throughout



Areas of Southeast Asia hit by last December's tsunami still face great needs. Lance Wallace photo

every challenge. In each event every one of us and every church has responded with generosity, passion, empathy, and prayers. We have been both impulsive and creative. In every instance CBF was inundated with volunteers before we had the capability to accommodate them. People and supplies and money were offered while the winds and waves were still breaking. In each instance all of us have had to reassess our priorities, recommit ourselves to "being the presence of Christ," and restructure our time and resources.

(continues to page 3)

Give to the
OFFERING FOR GLOBAL MISSIONS
National Goal: \$6,320,000

Offering helps personnel bring the "Bread of Life" to most neglected

Cooperative Baptist Fellowship Global Missions works with churches and others to provide the bread of life — spiritual, emotional, medical, educational, and economic — in partnership with the most neglected,

those with the greatest needs and the fewest resources.

Based on John 6:35, this year's Offering for Global Missions theme is "Famished Lands ... The Bread of Life." The Offering goal is \$6.32

million. One hundred percent of the Offering goes to assist Global Missions field personnel in connecting with the most neglected people and meeting human needs around the world. ■

Inside this issue

- Page 2..... • Frankly Speaking
- Page 3.. • From Our Missions Coordinator
- Page 4.. • From Our Associate Coordinator for Congregational Life
• Resource Wise
- Page 6..... • Disaster Hits...
- Page 11.. • Opportunities/Updates/Reports
- Page 12..... • Coming Up!



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Frankly speaking



Many of us grew up in churches deeply involved in mission education, mission service, and mission giving. We learned the language of missions. Words like local, state, home, and foreign had specific meaning. When a dollar was put in the offering plate, we pretty much knew how much stayed at home and how much went elsewhere. We even understood the formula that was used in our particular state to divide the gifts. It was, for the most part, a one-size-fits-all approach. Some flexibility existed in that special offerings for home and foreign missions, as well as benevolence causes like children's homes and hunger, were taken. It would be an understatement to say that the mission landscape has changed. Perhaps the single greatest contribution of the past twenty years of conflict in Baptist life has been the reemergence of the local church as the center of missions. Not only have local churches reasserted themselves theologically, but they have also done so missionally. They want to discover for themselves what their God-given mission is in the world. They do not want someone else telling them what to do. They do, however, want to cooperate with others in missions, and they want to do missions efficiently and effectively. That is why it is so important that organizations like CBF/GA understand our role. We are not primarily an organization that does missions for people. Granted, there is some of that. We do have 150 or so missionaries around the world, and we do support their work. We do have specific endeavors, such as the Rural Poverty Initiative. Our main focus in missions is to assist our churches as they seek their God-given place in missions. We are here to help each church become a mission outpost and each individual to be the presence of Christ in the world.

Doing missions today requires churches and individuals to do more homework. They must come to terms with what God is calling them to do, and they must

“...the single greatest contribution of the past twenty years of conflict in Baptist life has been the reemergence of the local church as the center of missions.”

find the best way to make it happen. That will often include mission involvement on the local level that is unique to a particular church and a particular context. It may also mean connecting with the state CBF and/or National CBF mission leaders in efforts to be the presence of Christ in the larger world. Helping rehab a home or start a new church in one's local city is one thing; doing it in another state or another country is quite another.

The movement of people, the expansion of technology, and globalization in the market place have radically changed the face of our world. Churches are waking up to find that most everything has been globalized, including missions. The neat distinctions of past generations have broken down. That is in part why CBF speaks of Global missions instead of simply Home and Foreign. That is why CBF speaks in terms of people groups and not nations. What is needed is a framework from and through which individuals and churches can navigate this exciting minefield of mission opportunities. That is the challenge of those of us who have connected with CBF. That is what we are trying to do. We want to develop mechanisms that enable individuals and churches to better do missions. I hope you and your church will join the effort. If we can do that, our effort in missions will not be in vain.

—Frank Broome, Coordinator

Memos from our missions coordinator



¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was with God in the beginning. ³ Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. ⁴ In him was life, and that life was the light of men. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it. ⁶ There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all men might believe. ⁸ He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. ⁹ The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world. ¹⁰ He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. ¹¹ He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. ¹² Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God — ¹³ children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God. ¹⁴ The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.
John 1:1-14 NIV (www.BibleGateway.com)

Missions, all Missions, is about the Word becoming flesh and dwelling among the people, whoever they are, and becoming the presence of God with the people to whom God has called us to share the Good News of God's love. This is called incarnation! The truth is that it costs money these days to go to the people who have not

heard the Gospel. The truth is also that the church loves to hear the stories of the successful enterprise of the missionaries we support. The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship has chosen to share the Gospel with people who have not heard the Gospel. The hard truth is that we have chosen to share the Gospel in places where there are few dramatic stories of success which can be told in a public forum. That makes it very difficult to motivate people to give their money because they love to hear the dramatic stories of success. We cannot use names, places or describe the families who have been called to dwell in the places where people have never heard the gospel.

Mission trips are a popular means of involving people in missions today, and they are certainly an effective means of accomplishing the goal of energizing the local church. It does not, however, fulfill the principle of incarnational missions. We will always need the missionaries whom God calls to plant their lives in a place and live out the Gospel. The Global Mission Offering is a means to planting and supporting the missionaries on the field. I would encourage you to pray about what God would have you do and then be faithful to follow his leadership in giving to Global Missions.

—Jimmy Lewis

Pooling Resources...

(continued from page 1)

Now, more than at any time before, I realize how important a cooperative approach to missions is. Do we not all recognize that we can do more together than we can separately? We can respond to human suffering individually with mercy drops of help. But left to our individual imaginations, we lack holistic strategies, structural, and long-lasting help. After the emotional and generous response to one disaster, our attention is quickly turned to another, often forgetting the suffering left behind in the former emergency.

That's where CBF comes in. That's where the coherent wisdom of CBF field personnel and missionaries can help us all be effective and efficient. That's where each pastor and each lay person can collaborate. When Tsunami hit, CBF field personnel familiar with the cultures and languages of the affected region turned our mercy drops into lasting and strategic witness. When Ivan and Katrina hit, CBF field personnel were there, on the spot, coordinating and encouraging. We have not been perfect. We are learning. But we are learning together.

We need each other. And, at this time of the year, we especially need each other to support the people who have responded to God's call to be the presence of Christ at all times, in season and out of season, in disaster and tranquility.

We all need to give to the CBF Global Missions Offering because without collective support to CBF missions our efforts are scattered, our effectiveness is transitory and sometimes illusory.

The offering helps us all focus on our cooperative, collective response to the lost and hurting persons of the world. The Global Missions Offering rallies us all to say, "We can do more together than we can separately." This year more than ever we need to give our best, most sacrificial offering. ■

Mission Opportunity to Give the Gift of Life

THIS IS A TIME WHEN we are getting ready to prepare to give at Christmas to the less fortunate children of the world. In many places we are preparing shoe boxes with all kinds of goodies. Listed below is an option for a gift at Christmas that can really make a difference –

the gift of life.

First of all, calculate this set of facts: Malaria claims twice the number of victims as AIDS each year. Globally, 500 million people are infected with malaria each year. Ninety percent (90%) are in Africa. Every 30 seconds a child dies of malaria.

You can make a difference. For \$6.00 you can provide an insecticide-treated sleeping net for an entire family. Go to www.hisnets.org and see how you can give the gift of life for Christmas. Contact Jimmy Lewis at jlewis@cbfga.org for more information. ■

From our associate coordinator for congregational life



I believe the best missions education is “hands on.” My first and most meaningful “hands on” experiences occurred over multiple summer and spring break mission trips and a two-year stint overseas after college. These experiences taught me some important lessons that have forever altered my understanding of missions and who I am as a missionary.

Missionaries are real people. They face the challenges of life just like you and I do. Everyday is not filled with Bible study classes or worship services. Some days are more mundane and involve figuring out where to buy groceries (and what to buy!), how to do laundry without a washer or dryer, where to catch the bus or subway, and how to communicate despite language and cultural barriers.

Missional moments occur in life’s everyday moments lived with intention. Relationship building is key to the missionary’s work. Simple acts like baking cookies, attending the ballet, or going on a picnic become opportunities for sharing God’s love and grace while sharing life with a neighbor or friend.

I am a global Christian. My life is linked with people in places like Russia, Korea, Liberia, and Germany. Whenever I hear a news report from these parts of the world or overhear a conversation in Russian in the grocery store, my heart is immediately in tune. I care.

These are my lessons! I don’t think I could have ever learned them otherwise.

Having said all this, our first goal in missions education must be to find hands-on, practical ways for learners of all ages to experience missions. In the following Resource Wise section you will find a list of resources and opportunities that will invite you and your church’s members to participate in the missionary life. With God’s help, as you involve yourself in the lives of others, you will learn your own lessons that have lasting meaning for you!

—Devita Parnell

Resource Wise

Project Ideas for Missions Education

- Invite a representative from CBF staff and field personnel to share through dialogue and storytelling (www.thefellowship.info/face2face/).
- Volunteer in a local soup kitchen, clothes closet, or homeless shelter.
- Spend a summer or semester in mission service through Student.go (www.destinationmissions.net).
- Learn about mission trip opportunities through CBF’s Volunteer Missions. Contact Timothy Wood at 800-782-2451 or volunteer@thefellowship.info.
- Become a part of the Interfaith Hospitality Network and help house families without homes (www.nihn.org).
- Sponsor a yard sale give-away at a local apartment complex. Each family receives five tickets to be exchanged for needed items. No money is exchanged.
- Visit ethnic restaurants, districts of town, houses of worship.
- Learn more about a particular people group and share years of relationship building through Adopt-a-People (www.thefellowship.info).
- Participate in “collecting” projects: canned goods, loose change, clothing, school supplies, toiletry items, children’s books, or blankets for local ministries.
- Build a relationship with an international student. Invite them to celebrate special occasions with you or your church family. Have them cook for you!
- Attend local ethnic festivals.
- Incorporate music, food, language, art, and clothing from other cultures into lessons.
- Help tutor a child of other language backgrounds.
- Sponsor a church-wide “missions day” through Operation Inasmuch (www.operationinasmuch.com).
- Fly the flag of the mission trip destination at your church while the mission team is away as a way to promote prayer and to send a message to your community that your church is open to all people.
- Become a pen pal with a missionary or missionary kid.
- Participate in mission weekends/ weeks through programs like Passport (www.passport.org), Kingdom Builders (www.kbministries.org), or March Mission Madness (www.cbfga.org).
- Participate in Shoes for Orphan Souls – ministry of Buckner Baptist Benevolences (www.buckner.org or www.shoesfororphansouls.org).

Print & Web Resources for Missions Education

- **Resources from CBF** (www.thefellowship.info)

CBF Missions Curriculum for preschoolers, children, youth, and adults with an updated look starting Fall 2007. For a free sample, call 1-888-801-4CBF.

It's Time: A Journey Toward Missional Faithfulness through an 8-week study on what it means to live a missional lifestyle, both as an individual and as a church. Includes sermons, small-group studies, and personal, devotional material.

Videos on People Groups and Global Missions Offering.

- **Animal Crackers**, A World Hunger Education Resource for Children, Youth, and Adults. Available through Heifer International: www.heiferfoundation.org/
- **Operation World** – prayer and educational resources. (www.gmi.org/ow/)
- **You Can Change the World: Learning to Pray for People Around the World**, Jill Johnstone (Zondervan Publishing); Vol. 2 by Daphne Spraggett.
- **World Fact Book** – great source for country information, flags, etc. (www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/)
- **Kids Around the World Cook, Kids Around the World Play, Kids Around the World Create** – all by Arlette N. Braman (www.arlettebraman.com).
- **www.asiaforkids.com** – resource for teaching kids Asian languages and cultures that includes books, videos, CDs, crafts, dolls, games.
- **unp.un.org/bookshop/** — United Nations Bookshop.
- **Global Women** — exists to create worldwide friendships among women for shared learning and service (www.globalwomengo.org).
- **Round the World: Fun Ways to Grow Mission-minded Children** and **Round the World Crafts, Games, and Activities**, by Jane Choun.
- **101 Simple Service Projects Kids Can Do**, Susan L. Lingo (Standard Publishing, 2000).
- **Hand to Hand** is a book of helpful resources compiled by CBF/NC to involve yourself, your family, and your

church in serving your community and beyond.

\$10.00 per copy. Contact CBF/NC at 1-888-822-1944 or cbfnc@cbfnc.org.

- **The following Offering for Global Missions resources** can be ordered on-line through the CBF Store or by contacting the CBF Store at 1-888-801-4223. Order on-line by visiting www.thefellowship.info then click on >>>The CBF Store button>>>The CBF Store Link>>>Product

Overview>>>Global Missions and Ministries>>>Global Missions and Ministries: Offering for Global Missions Promotion. You will find these resources plus many, many, more.

The "How-To" Guide for Promoting the 2005-2006 Offering for Global Missions FREE!

Famished Lands ... The Bread of Life Multimedia Video FREE!

Famished Lands ... The Bread of Life Bulletin Insert FREE!

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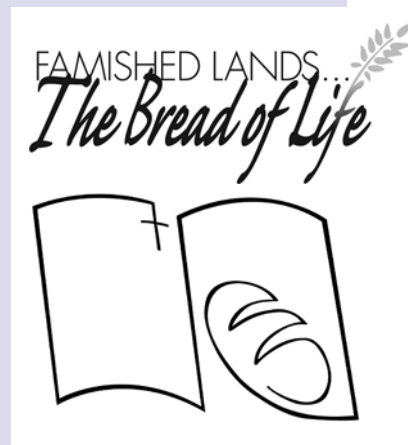
Offering for Global Missions Envelopes FREE!

"Sharing in God's Grace ... by Praying One for Another" Year-Long Guide to Global Missions Prayer FREE!

Partners in Prayer Calendar FREE!

Offering for Global Missions Bank FREE!

—Project ideas on page 4 along with the above print and web resources compiled by Devita Parnell



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Email us at visions@cbfga.org and start receiving the biweekly e-newsletter, Re-Visions.



DISASTER HITS...

Georgians Respond



CBF/Georgia churches respond with "grass-roots" relief efforts

By Phillip W. Smith, Minister of Students & Missions, First Baptist Church, Rome

IN THE IMMEDIATE AFTERMATH of Hurricane Katrina, it seemed as if the agencies which typically respond to such disasters, and indeed the entire nation, were in a state of shock. Out of this sense of almost overwhelming shock, churches within the CBF family sprang into action in what I describe as the largest grass-roots relief effort in my lifetime. One such example of this is a response that developed over a period of hours and ultimately involved local churches in our area, the CBF organization in Mississippi, a church at one of the many "ground zeroes," and ultimately a handful of non-CBF churches in the affected area.

It was the Tuesday following the hurricane when my pastor, Joel Snider, and I talked about how we as a church might respond. An immediate need that was apparent was drinking water. But where could we send water? How could we communicate with those in need to determine the best accessible location to deliver water? We made a short list of possibilities which included the CBF of Mississippi and a "random" church called University Baptist, in Hattiesburg. Phone lines were not working in Hattiesburg, but after several attempts I was able to make contact with Steve Street, Mississippi CBF Coordinator, in Jackson. Steve knew of a few possibilities, and among them was University Baptist. He found a way to communicate with UBC Pastor Phillip Reynolds, and determined that the church would be a suitable place to distribute water and other essentials, as soon as a distribution team from CBF National could arrive, assess, and set-up an operation. All of this took place within 24 hours.

After consulting our Missions Committee and making numerous calls to area water bottlers and truck rental shops, we devised a plan to take pallets of water in a 24-foot truck to University Baptist in Hattiesburg. Funds and goods poured in from the church, the larger faith community, and many schools and individuals who heard about our plans through word of mouth and circulating emails. The first load arrived in Hattiesburg just in time for the distribution site to be set up by Ken Corcoran, Missions Minister at FBC Columbus, and Tommy Deal, Coordinator of Florida CBF. After the initial loads of water, the needs soon expanded to include canned foods, diapers, toiletries, baby formula, and cleaning supplies. Our rented truck became a fixture at the back loading dock of Sam's Club and at a particular local gas station where we could fill the diesel tanks on both sides at one time. In all there were nine trips to Hattiesburg, Jackson, and later to Slidell, LA. Items were distributed as, and where, they were needed most, involving CBF churches and other denominations.



Volunteers from University Baptist in Hattiesburg and First Baptist of Rome unload water and other supplies onsite at University Baptist. Supplies were handed out to those who could come to the church, and some supplies were taken to homes of those who could not travel.

Over the weeks since all of this occurred, much has been said and printed about the difficulties of the government response as well as that of some of the large disaster-response agencies. The story that has gone largely untold is that of hundreds, if not thousands, of Christians and congregations that found a place to mount their own disaster response effort. I have heard story after story about churches everywhere who partnered in various ways with churches in the affected areas. Some collected and transported needed items. Some sent in early response teams to clear debris and "dry-in" houses. Some found creative and less public ways to meet needs. Without any heavily-coordinated, ultra-organized, systematic plan, people of God came together to be the presence of Christ in areas where need was plenty and chaos was looming. In CBF we talk a lot about partnerships. This nationwide, grass-roots response effort was nothing less than the epitome of how our partnerships were meant to work.

Georgia doctor gets hands-on experience with Katrina relief

By Courtney Hodges, CBF Communications

ATLANTA – Flooded streets, destroyed homes, separated families, and the promise of uncertainty are recurring realities in the weeks after Hurricane Katrina. Monetary donations and other supplies continue to pour into relief organizations while some use other skills to aid Katrina victims. Dr. Drayton Sanders (First Baptist Church of Dalton) spent five days in Louisiana helping with medical relief efforts. Sanders contacted the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and quickly received an assignment in Louisiana. Within hours, Sanders boarded an Angel Flight and headed to Baton Rouge and then to New Orleans. He was assigned to work at the Pete Maravich Center basketball arena at Louisiana State University.



Dalton, Ga., physician, Dr. Drayton Sanders, far right, and a relief team including National Guard members and FEMA representatives, worked together in the days following Katrina's devastating blow to New Orleans.

Sanders was motivated to help with Katrina efforts because of previous disasters in the United States. "We sometimes do things we should do, and sometimes we don't do things we should do," he said. "After 9/11, I decided that I'm not going to just sit and wait to be asked to help. I'm going." As a layman at First Baptist Church of Dalton, Sanders retired so he could help with activities like this. "We are all ministers, and that is very Baptist," Sanders said. "And though I am not seminary trained, I take very seriously my obligation to be a minister."

With experience as a pulmonary and critical care doctor, Sanders worked with the intensive care group at LSU. Most of his patients suffered from dehydration or illness related to not taking prescribed medications. Some suffered greatly from traumatic injuries and infection. Sanders recounted one experience with a woman who was uncooperative in requests to treat her. Struggling to get answers about a medical history, Sanders asked the woman if her family knew where she was. Her eyes popped open and she said, "No, and I don't know where they are." Sanders inquired whether the woman had a way to contact them. The woman quickly found a phone number and used Sanders' phone. She discovered that her family had relocated to Houston. "It was a tearful reunion," Sanders said. "After that she was very talkative and helpful. I had not realized how important it was for people to communicate with their families."

One man paraded through the arena serenading doctors with jazz riffs like, "When the Saints Go Marching In" after being treated. Sanders also worked with the New Orleans Police Department. While he was with the police, waters in Chalmette, St. Bernard Parish receded and Sanders was dispatched with a team of five ambulances to help evacuate 500 people. Upon arriving, they discovered the Navy was in the process of evacuating the 500. Other communication problems continued to be an issue. Excessive volunteers and supplies were brought to areas that did not need them, and other areas did not have access to necessary supplies. In the future, Sanders said, volunteers should work through agencies because "it's important before you go to know where you are going and that you have a specific assignment and are meeting a specific need. Otherwise you might find yourself underused."

Finally, Sanders said it was an experience he will never forget. "Parts of it I don't want to remember, and yet there were some wonderful experiences."

Disaster response with Hurricane Katrina

By Ken Corcoran, Minister of Missions, First Baptist Church, Columbus

VERY EARLY ON THE MORNING of September 2, a CBF Disaster Response Team headed to University Baptist Church in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. University Baptist Church, a Cooperative Baptist Church, had sent out a call for help.

Hurricane Katrina ravaged the city and surrounding communities of Hattiesburg, along with areas in the coastal areas of Mississippi, western Alabama, and eastern Louisiana. Homes of members of University Baptist Church sustained considerable damage from downed trees, had damaged roofs, and lost electricity for weeks.

The CBF Disaster Response Team led by Ken Corcoran, Minister of Missions at First Baptist Church of Columbus, Georgia, quickly moved in and started the process of setting up a Disaster Recovery Center (DRC). The location for the center was in the music suite and back parking lot of University Baptist Church.

The purpose of a DRC is to coordinate volunteers and gifts-in-kind to help with the recovery process. The model for the Hattiesburg response was much like the response model used in 2004 when the hurricanes hit Florida. The model works



Tommy Deal, Associate Coordinator CBF/Florida, unloading water for the Distribution Center.



Ken Corcoran, Minister of Missions, FBC Columbus, sorting items for distribution.



CBF Disaster Response identification for response vehicle.



Disaster Recovery Center (DRC) office at University Baptist Church in Hattiesburg, MS. (Front: Peggy Myatt, DRC Volunteer Coordinator assisting individuals as they describe their needs.)

to lend help to the local church, helping them to get back on their feet, then, reach out to neighbors and friends, and then move to helping the community.

The team faced significant obstacles in setting up and operating the DRC in Hattiesburg. No electricity, very limited gasoline supplies which resulted in several-mile lines at the gas stations, and no storage facilities for gifts-in-kind, all of which were much needed, required the team to find alternate ways of making the operation work. Generators were brought in to provide for basic electrical needs, travel in vehicles was limited, and tents were set up to use as warehouse space.

Within hours of the CBF Disaster Response Team's getting the DRC set up, gifts-in-kind and volunteer teams arrived. The rear parking lot of University Baptist Church suddenly became a "drive-thru" distribution center with vehicles lining up to receive goods such as water, diapers, personal hygiene items, cleaning supplies, and food. Volunteer teams were assigned work orders to remove debris and cover roofs. The work orders were received and assigned based on the operations model going first to church members and then moving on to others.

In addition to volunteers coming from Alabama, Georgia, Arkansas, and Texas, local volunteers from the church and community gave of their time to help their fellow parishioners and community. Pastor Phillip Reynolds and church members Bryant and Peggy Myatt, despite damage at their own homes, led the way for church volunteers.

Churches from Georgia and other states sent shipments of gifts-in-kind. First Baptist of Rome, Georgia, was very generous sending multiple truck loads to Hattiesburg and worked closely with the DRC to coordinate delivery days and times as supplies were most needed.

During the first week of operations, ten groups of volunteers totaling 106 persons worked at the distribution

center and on the work crews. A total of 22 shipments of gifts-in-kind were received and distributed during that week.

University Baptist Church in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, is very appreciative of the CBF Disaster Response Team's answering their call

for help. They can be proud of the fact that, with the help of CBF churches and others from out of state, their church extended a helping hand in time of need, therefore helping their community get back on their feet.

Work continues and will continue for
(continues to page 10)

ROCK EAGLE Stands **FIRM** in the Face of Hurricane Katrina

Following is an excerpt from a letter received after Hurricane Katrina led to the evacuation of New Orleans.

September 14, 2005

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

When Hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf Coast 2 weeks ago, we were all shocked to see the devastation that hit Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama. As we began meeting together to worship after Katrina hit, the main question was, "How can we help?" As we began to pray for the victims and how we in central Georgia could help, God answered rather quickly.

On Sunday, September 4th, over 600 evacuees from New Orleans arrived at Rock Eagle 4-H camp in Eatonton. The community of Eatonton responded quickly to assist the Red Cross in helping to get the evacuees settled and to make them as comfortable as possible. On Labor Day, over 300 volunteers from Putnam County, Morgan County, and Baldwin County spent the day in the Putnam County Recreation Department distributing clothes to evacuees who had nothing besides the clothes on their back.

Since then, the evacuees have become settled at Rock Eagle with some even being able to leave to go home with family members across the United States. The stories that are coming out of Rock Eagle are incredibly moving and a testimony of God's love and grace during disaster. There has also been more than one story of parents and children being reunited after being separated during the evacuation.

God has placed a mighty mission field in our back yard. The fields are certainly ripe with those who are in need of hearing and feeling the love of God in a difficult time in their life. Please join us in prayer as we seek how to respond to the challenge presented to us.

In Christ,
Jay Reber, Minister of Youth and Activities, First Baptist Church, Eatonton

Editor's Note: As of the date of this printing, all of the evacuees housed at Rock Eagle have been placed. Rock Eagle has been closed as a shelter for evacuees.



months to come in Mississippi, Alabama, and Louisiana. If you or your church group would like to offer a hand, contact the CBF Volunteer Office in Dallas, Texas, at 1-800-782-2451. They will work to find a place for you.

CBF volunteers in Kosovo reunited in Katrina cleanup

By Sue H. Poss, CBF Communications

SLIDELL, LA – Ernie Banner and Tony Buesing (First Baptist Church of Dahlonoga) are together again – at least for a couple of days.

Six years ago, Ernie and Sue Banner and Tony and Ricki Buesing were Cooperative Baptist Fellowship volunteers in Kosovo. Working in a war zone, they provided food, clothing, shelter, and support to those displaced by war and coordinated the work of volunteers who came to help.

In Slidell, Louisiana, this week Ernie and Tony were doing the same thing again, only this time their help was aimed at victims of a hurricane, left homeless by an act of nature. Buesing, of Dahlonoga, Georgia, was in his 15th day of relief work in Louisiana when he was joined by Banner, who had worked the previous week at a Fellowship relief center in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. Banner had come to relieve Buesing. Buesing's role was to oversee the distribution of gifts-in-kind sent to Louisiana hurricane victims through Fellowship churches and other sources. On Monday, their primary task was to set up a large 40-by-80-foot tent on the grounds of Bethany Lutheran Church in Slidell, one of the Fellowship's disaster relief partners in the area. Gifts-in-kind will be received, stored, and distributed from the tent.

In addition to their work in Kosovo, the Banners have also worked as Fellowship volunteers in Berlin and Prague where they were coordinators for volunteers. "I'm accustomed to working with people in tragic situations," Banner said. "And I'm accus-

tomed to the hardship and rigors of doing this kind of work." Banner is a retired Army chaplain who moved frequently. "I think that military background and moving around often have prepared me for this kind of work," he said. The Banners are former members of Kathwood Baptist Church in Columbia, South Carolina, where Phillip Reynolds, now the pastor of University Baptist Church in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, served for 14 years. They now live in The Villages in Florida. "I'm willing to give my time because a call to ministry can be expressed in more ways than just being a pastor, and I see a need here that cannot be met within the framework of the local church," Banner said.

Buesing is a retired Marine communications officer who has volunteered his time with the Fellowship for many years, including teaching English in Albania for two years. "Ricki and I went to the CBF General Assembly in Greensboro and felt a strong call to volunteer," he said. "I wanted to work

through CBF because it provides an opportunity for everyone to serve in spite of past mistakes or decisions and regardless of gender. And CBF is also open to working with all other Christian groups." The Fellowship, Buesing said, gives him the freedom to be "who I am in Christ."

The tent Buesing and Banner had been waiting on arrived by truck around mid-day. There were no instructions included. As luck would have it (and Buesing said there was no luck involved at all) a man who rents and sets up large party tents for a living was among a group from a Lutheran church in Indiana that was working at Bethany. He and his team had the tent set up by the end of the day.

Banner, tired as he was at the end of the grueling hot day, said he probably wouldn't sleep at all, though. "I'll be awake all night trying to figure out how to organize and distribute the goods." ■



Tony Buesing (left) and Ernie Banner erect a 40-by-80-foot tent that will be used to store gifts-in-kind at Bethany Lutheran Church in Slidell, LA. Sue H. Poss photo

Building Better Marriages

An opportunity to provide programs to help couples develop good, stable, marriages. Programs range from "Preparing To Be Married" to marriage enrichment programs. For more information, call: Roger Bolton at 404-547-3375 or Greg Samples 770-506-9575.

In the Belly of the Whale with Jonah

Evangelism with Integrity Dr. Jim Shoopman

Designed to help your church develop a positive attitude toward evangelism that is in keeping with your church's unique character and values. Dr. Shoopman works as Lecturer in Humanities, Ethics, and Comparative Religion at Embry-Riddle University. His undergraduate degree is from Stetson University, his M. Div. from New Orleans Seminary, and his Ph.D. in Humanities and Religious studies from Florida State University. You may contact Dr. Shoopman at 386-323-7938.

People and Places

Twyla Nelson was ordained on November 6th at First Baptist Church of Toccoa.

Dr. **Peter Rhea Jones** is serving as the Interim Pastor at First Baptist Church of Morrow.

Bill Hall, Minister of Music at First Baptist Church of Morrow, celebrated his 15th anniversary of service on November 6, 2005.

Vocational Opportunities

Position: Full-time Youth Minister

Send resume to:
Harlem Baptist Church
ATTN: DeWayne Smoak
P.O. Box 790
Harlem, GA 30814

Positions:

—**Part-time / Bi-vocational Children's Minister**

—**Part-time / Bi-vocational Youth Minister**

Send resume to:
Shurlington Baptist Church
2270 Shurling Drive
Macon, GA 31211
478-742-1488

Position: Bi-vocational Pastor

Send resume to:
Fellowship Baptist Church of Edison
PO Box 116
Edison, GA 39846

Fellowship Baptist, located in rural Southwest Georgia, is affiliated with the CBF and the Alliance of Baptists.

Financial Picture

2005-2006 Year-to-Date
June 1-October 31, 2005

Budget Requirement \$268,750.00
Undesignated Receipts \$246,838.80
Designated Receipts \$ 48,846.28



FIND OUT HOW TO SHARE
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To find out more about *face2face*, visit www.thefellowship.info/face2face or contact 770-220-1630 or face2face@thefellowship.info.

Distinguished Churchwoman of the Year

EACH YEAR, Baptist Women in Ministry of Georgia honors a woman from our state as Distinguished Churchwoman of the Year. Qualifications for this award include significant contributions to ministry by a Baptist woman who has experienced a call to ministry and is fulfilling that call in a salaried and/or non-salaried position. Nominations for this honor are reviewed, and the final selection is made by the Steering Committee of Baptist Women in Ministry of Georgia. Nominations by persons throughout the state are welcomed and should include a brief written summary of the woman's call, qualifications for ministry, and a letter of recommendation.

All nominations should be received in writing by March 15. Nominees for the award are evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Demonstrates faithful commitment to the development of her ministry;
- Exhibits the characteristics of a mentor of women in ministry;
- Exemplifies qualities of gifted leadership and redemptive service;
- Maintains an active role in the ministry of her local church;
- Displays support for the goals and visions of BWIMGA.

The recipient of the award will be honored during the annual spring meeting of Baptist Women in Ministry of Georgia.

Please mail all nominations to:
Nikki Hardeman
c/o First Baptist Church
P.O. Box 1189
Rome, GA 30162-1189

COOPERATIVE
BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP

GEORGIA

P.O. Box 4343
Macon GA 31208-4343



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CBF GA coming up!

January 23-25 (*Session is full; please see other locations listed in following paragraph.*)

Spiritual Formation Regional Retreat

Montreat Conference Center, Montreat, NC

The retreat is open to senior pastors, including pastors who serve as lone ministerial staff in smaller congregations. Other retreat locations are Texas, **April 3-5**; Kentucky, **Sept. 11-13**; and Atlanta at a date to be determined. Registration is available on a first-come basis. To register online, visit www.thefellowship.info/CL/FF/TrainingEvents/Registration.icm. For more information, contact Rick Bennett at 770-220-1605 or rbennett@thefellowship.info.

February 4

Now Serving: Atlanta 2006

9 a.m. – 7:30 p.m. McAfee School of Theology and CBF of Georgia team up to sponsor this one-day collegiate mission event in Atlanta. Students will experience a variety of mission sites around the city. The day concludes with dinner and worship. Cost of \$5 includes meals and t-shirt. Contact Ryan Clark at clark_ra@mercer.edu or Devita Parnell at dparnell@cbfga.org for more information.

February 8-9

Dr. Henry Mugabe's Visit to Macon

Sponsored by CBF/GA, The Christianity Department (Mercer), The Office of the Minister to the University (Mercer), The Center for Baptist Studies (Mercer), Vineville Baptist Church (Macon), and First Baptist Church of Christ of Macon. Dr. Mugabe is the president of the Baptist Theological Seminary in Zimbabwe. For additional information contact Bruce T. Gourley at 478-301-5467 or email Gourley_BT@Mercer.edu.

February 8-11

Current Retreat, First Baptist Church of Decatur

Current is a group of young Baptist ministers, leaders, and divinity students who seek to connect young Baptists through the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. For more information on the web visit www.thefellowship.info/current/2006retreat.icm.

March 3-4

CBF/GA General Assembly, First Baptist Church of Athens

Guest preacher: Jim Dant

March 6-8

True Survivor VI, Daniel Island (Charleston), SC

A training event for all Christian Educators and age group ministers. Featuring: Ivy Beckwith, *Postmodern Children's Ministry*, and Dave Odom, Center for Congregational Health. Cost is \$50 per person. Contact Toni Draper at tdraper@thefellowship.info or 770-220-1654.

March 8-9

Children's Ministries Network Retreat

Providence Baptist Church, Daniel Island (Charleston), SC

Cost is \$25 per participant. For more info contact Cathy Anderson at canderson@fbca.net or Tricia Hays at thays@wilshirebc.org.

March 17-19, FBC Warm Springs March 24-26, FBC Morrow

March Mission Madness 10th Anniversary

Contact: Scott Ford at robertscottford@mac.com

May 4-5

The University Campus: Tomorrow's Moderate Baptists

First Baptist Church of Decatur

1:30 p.m. (May 4) – 12 noon (May 5)

Co-sponsored by the Center for Baptist Studies, CBF National, and CBF/GA. This conference seeks to act as a catalyst for collegiate ministry among moderate Baptists and to encourage concrete actions at the local church level in the area of college missions. Email Devita Parnell at dparnell@cbfga.org or Bruce T. Gourley at Gourley_BT@Mercer.edu for more information.

June 11-16

Touching Taliaferro with Love (TTWL) Day Camp

For additional information email Jimmy Lewis at jlewis@cbfga.org.

June 26-30

TTWL Baseball Camp

For additional information email Jimmy Lewis at jlewis@cbfga.org.