

VISIONS



April / May '06

Cultivating Leadership for Ministry

THE QUESTION OF LEADERSHIP comes up more and more these days. People want to know what CBF is doing to ensure we will have capable leaders for our churches and for our CBF organizations in the future. The short answer is “plenty!” This particular issue of *Visions* is devoted to some of those initiatives. Hopefully it will give you a glimpse of the leadership landscape.

Most of us in leadership positions today came out of a system that worked fairly well — at least for men. However, this male dominated mentoring system has to a large extent broken down. No single system has arisen to take its place. Some people think leaders are just born. That may be true in part. Personality matters. Intelligence matters. One could argue that events matter — that is, leadership is a result of forces outside our control. We are made to be leaders by circumstances. That certainly can be true. Whether we are talking about Abraham Lincoln or Coretta Scott King, circumstances matter. No doubt, leadership has something to do with ability and with circumstance. However, we cannot base a leadership development strategy on these two factors alone. More than ever we need to understand that leadership can be developed.

Individuals who would be leaders need to know who they are. This is largely a matter of what CBF calls “faith formation.” It is something we do through the teaching and preaching ministry of the church. “What does it mean to be a Christian?”

and “What does it mean to be a Baptist?” are just two of the important questions we must help future leaders answer.

To be a leader one must also have the kind of specialized knowledge that enables him/her to lead. This knowledge includes everything from scripture to church governance. Especially now it means being comfortable with technology. It is not a sin to know what it means to instant message or “podcast” or use Bluetooth or WI-FI. In addition, leadership means knowing what to do. Real leadership has to do with what some call the “vision thing.” It is seeing around the corner, so to speak. It is making decisions that are not only good for today but for tomorrow.

If you were to ask me what the leadership strategy of CBF/GA is, I would call it a developmental strategy. It starts with the giftedness of the individual. It addresses the character and values questions through faith formation. It provides focused training. It nurtures a developing vision. Finally, it seeks to provide the kind of experiences that promote growth. So when you hear about March Mission Madness, Passport Camps, Current, or Convergence, you will know that we are trying to develop leaders. It is a process that never ends.



*growth developer
cultivated leader
sound theologian
visionary*

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Educating for Growth

Healthy, growing leaders make for a healthy, growing church and a healthy, growing Fellowship!

WHEN I WAS a college student, I was asked by the church that I attended to write an advent devotion. I still remember the anxiety I felt as I prepared something about the assigned text. I had no clue what the text meant nor had I lived long enough to write from experience. Rather than illumine the path or give hope for living, I imagine that I only confused my devotional readers. Later in my life, as a seminary student, I was asked to serve on the CBF/GA missions committee. One of my seminary professors was the chair of the committee and knew that I had some experience serving as a missionary. Who knows how much I actually contributed to the work of that committee, given my busy school schedule that limited me in my service. However, looking back on both of these situations and many others, I thank God for those people who saw gifts in me that I didn't even know existed. I thank God for offering me opportunity after opportunity to grow and develop those gifts for service and ministry. I thank God I said "yes."

Growing and developing gifts for ministry in every believer is what the church is to be about. In this issue of *Visions* you will read some of the ways that CBF/GA partners not only with the churches, but with the seminaries as well, to help flesh out this high calling. For youth and college students, we are providing mission and service opportunities like March Mission Madness and Now Serving. We are also providing scholarships to college and seminary students. At the undergraduate level, the student does not have to be pursuing ministry as a full-time vocation. This is just one way that we are affirming the role of an educated and strong laity. In this issue you will meet the twelve recipients of the 2005-2006 scholarships. Another aspect of our leadership development initiative is giving experience to two students per year to serve on the Coordinating Council. Those student representatives are featured in this issue as well. As seminary graduates are entering into their first years of ministry, CBF/GA has helped to fund one residency opportunity as well as clergy development opportunities like Convergence. Finally, CBF/GA is committed to supporting regional meetings of clergy for continued education and growth in Peer Learning Groups.

These are some of the formal ways that CBF/GA is striving to grow and develop leaders for ministry. This work is vital because healthy, growing leaders make for a healthy, growing church and a healthy, growing Fellowship!

Devita Parnell

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New **FREE** Resources Available to CBF/GA Churches!

Thanks to **Baptist Center for Ethics**, CBF/GA is able to offer the following resources to churches free. You may download both at the CBF/GA website at www.cbfga.org. Churches and individuals may download and reproduce these materials for distribution to Sunday School and other classes or to their membership at large.

Living the Lord's Prayer – a devotional guide that studies the Lord's Prayer in depth. Each section includes questions for personal reflection or group discussion.

In the Beginning God – student and leader's guide for this 13 week study on the stories of Genesis.

2005-06 CBF /GA Scholarship Recipients

IN 2005-2006, CBF/GA began awarding scholarships *directly* to students. The following 12 recipients were selected on the basis of three references and an essay that addressed his/her faith journey and vocational goals and demonstrated his/her connection to a CBF/GA church. CBF/GA also awards scholarships to rising college seniors. For more information on the scholarship process or to download applications, visit www.cbfga.org/calendar.htm#opportunities.



★★★ **Michael Goodman**
Candler School of Theology,
Peachtree Baptist Church,
Atlanta, GA

"I feel strongly about the potential of local parish ministry. Because of my love relationship with the human drama, as told through the tragic deaths of those ravaged by violence and the tragic lives of those ravaged by meaninglessness and loneliness, I feel a general pastoral call to be worked out either through the university, the church, or social ministry (parachurch or other)."



★★★ **Justin Nelson**
McAfee School of Theology,
First Baptist Church of Toccoa,
GA

"I think I have always known that ministry is where God wanted me to be. Growing up my entire life in church and going to summer church camps and mission trips, I

learned I had a heart for ministry, specifically in missions! However, my experience this past summer (at PASSPORTkids!) helped me discover that I enjoyed working with kids and can see myself possibly being a Children's minister. I think I would especially enjoy going into camp ministry, because as I learned this summer, great joy comes from seeing the light bulbs come on inside kids'/youth's heads."



★★★ **Martha Kate Berry**
George W. Truett Theological
Seminary, First Baptist Church
of Augusta, GA

"I am thrilled about the future that stands before me. I am open and willing to go wherever God calls me and to serve in whatever way God desires. I am confident in knowing

that God has a purpose for my life and that purpose will be fulfilled through my life as I continue to follow God's will."



★★★ **Jeannette Jordan**
McAfee School of Theology,
Heritage Baptist Fellowship,
Canton, GA

"I was in a small church in Smyrna, Georgia, when I realized the call of God on my life to formal ministry. Like Samuel, I didn't recognize the voice; but I too had an Eli in my life

to point out that it was the voice of God. That began my quest in ministry, one that ultimately led me to seminary. My vocational call is more of an evangelistic one that I feel will lead me to many congregations to speak of ways to recognize the voice of God speaking and directing us all to particular calls of service."



★★★ **Jeffrey Davis**
Candler School of Theology,
Madison Baptist Church,
Madison, GA

"While I am always mindful that God is continuing to work out His plans in my life, I envision that my role in His plan will involve teaching ethics from a Christian perspective.

My work as a lawyer with the disenfranchised has given me the ability to communicate with and have an influence upon those whom our society, and regrettably the church, often ignores. Also my legal experience in the area of ethics and professional responsibility uniquely equips me as a teacher of ethics from both a secular perspective and a Christian one. In that vein, I hope that my ministry will be decidedly evangelical as I seek to reach the lost, neglected and disenfranchised."



★★★ **Gail Liebman**
McAfee School of Theology,
First Baptist Church of
Marietta, GA

"I am committed to equipping myself for ministry by striving continually to develop a mature and deep spiritual life, by the disciplines required by McAfee's theological

curriculum, and by learning how 'to do' evangelism and missions. As far as long-term goals are concerned, my confidence lies in the fact that I know God will lead me."

(continues to page 4)

CBF /GA Scholarship Recipients

(continues from page 3)



★★★ **Beth Parlier**
Candler School of Theology,
Wieuca Road Baptist Church,
Atlanta, GA

"As Music Assistant at Wieuca Road Baptist Church, I was presented with the unique opportunity to help lead youth on a mission and choir trip to Germany. It was during this

time that I began to realize that God was calling me to something more. I felt God's presence intensely in those months before, during, and after the trip and came to understand that God had been preparing me all along in the areas of teaching, music, and missions to answer this unique call to full-time vocational ministry."



★★★ **Greg Smith**
McAfee School of Theology,
Parkway Baptist Church,
Duluth, GA

"Increasingly I have found myself wanting to dig into the deeper issues of life, the issues of meaningful purpose, vision, and direction. I have wanted to work with people to

help them as they struggle with these issues that underlie the stressful striving that so many are trapped in. One by one I considered different ministry roles- hospital chaplaincy, pastoral counseling, hospice care, Christian education, Senior Adult ministry, and administration. I looked at everything but the obvious role, that of Pastor. When at last I did, I felt a sense of peace that this indeed is the new direction in which I am being called."



★★★ **Gigi Kerr**
McAfee School of Theology,
First Baptist Church of West
Point, GA

"I am one who believes that one of the best ways to teach people about God is to love them and meet their needs. Thus, I can envision myself in a life of ministry through mis-

sions. I believe that God will lead me and direct my path to the place where He needs me to serve, and my heart is open and willing to his call."



★★★ **Ronald Handlon**
McAfee School of Theology,
Parkway Baptist Church,
Duluth, GA

"The more I began to recognize my own limitations in understanding God, the greater at peace I became. Though my desire to know God has never diminished, my understanding of this desire and what it means to know God have taken on new dimensions. My time in seminary has led me to believe that God is calling me to be both a teacher and a pastor."



★★★ **Meg Olive**
McAfee School of Theology, First
Baptist Church of Columbus, GA

"My ministry goal is missions education, which includes educating, empowering, connecting, and supporting church members as they minister globally, as well as locally. I feel especially called to connect

needy women around the world with women who have the resources readily available to meet those needs."



★★★ **Beth Pirkle**
McAfee School of Theology,
Wieuca Road Baptist Church,
Atlanta, GA

"Over the past few years, my ministerial goals have become clearer. I want to see a united global church that shows unity while embracing diversity. On a smaller scale, my

other ministerial goal is to intentionally use my influence to help others in their spiritual walk. As a high school teacher, I have seen the power that caring for and mentoring teenagers can have. As I continue on the journey God has laid before me and as I work towards teaching at a higher level, I hope to increase my ability to influence others for Christ, maintain my global outlook, and keep my Baptist roots because the combination contains the ability to further the kingdom of God while I am here on earth."

... affirming the role of educated and strong leaders and laity

For more information contact Devita Parnell
at 478-742-1191, toll free 1-877-336-6426,
or dparnell@cbfga.org

Where Are They Now?

Student Representatives for CBF/GA Coordinating Council

1999

Doug Ivey – (McAfee) Pastor, The Oaks Traditional Baptist Church, Lyons

Tripp Martin – (UGA) Associate Pastor, Northminster Baptist Church, Jackson, MS

2000

Doug Ivey – same
Tripp Martin – same

2001

Andrea Dellinger (Jones) – (McAfee) Minister of Christian Formation and Children, Chestnut Grove Baptist Church, Earlysville, VA

Kim Heath – (McAfee) Children's Ministry Resident, First Baptist Church, Dalton

2002

Kim Heath – same
Matt DuVall – (McAfee) Minister to Students, First Baptist Church, Athens

2003

Matt Duvall – same
Elizabeth Rickert – (Candler) Pastor, Tar Wallet Baptist Church and Oak Grove Baptist Church, Cumberland, VA

2004

Jeremy Lewis – (Candler) Administrative Assistant for New Church Starts, CBF National, Atlanta

Julie Whidden (Long) – (McAfee) Minister to Children, First Baptist Church of Christ, Macon

2005

Dusty Haynie – (McAfee) Pastor, Friendship Baptist Church, Palmetto
Beth Parlier – (Candler) Music Ministry Assistant, Wieuca Road Baptist Church, Atlanta

“You’re Ready to Be Pastor”

THAT’S WHAT DAVID KEY, the Director of Baptist Studies, said to me when we met for lunch in September of my final year at Candler School of Theology. “You have what you need; Candler has given it to you. What you don’t know, you’ll learn. You’re ready,” he repeated.

I didn’t feel entirely ready, but it is amazing what power those words held for me and for my confidence. David believed that I was ready. My professors were telling me that I was ready, that I would make a fine pastor. The easier road seemed to be to start out as an associate pastor, still learning, still growing like I had been doing in seminary. “Well, we’ll look for those positions, too, but I really think that you shouldn’t rule out becoming a pastor right out of school,” David reassured me. “That’s what seminary is for, after all. And you never know, Elizabeth. There might just be a quaint little church that’s just waiting for you.”

It turns out he was only half right. There wasn’t just one, but two quaint little churches that were just waiting for me to become their pastor. I am the pastor of Tar Wallet and Oak Grove Baptist Churches here in Cumberland, Virginia. And David was right about another thing; what I didn’t know, I surely have learned.

There has been so much to learn over these past twenty months as a new pastor. I feel that I have just begun to learn my people, and, in many ways, that I have just begun to learn me, my new “vocated” self. I have learned more about the Bible than I did in all my seminary classes, because I am the one who has to open it up in their midst and make meaning out of it with them, in their pain and in their hope, in their sorrow and in their joy. These are lessons that, most of the time, no one else is much interested in but me. They would bore some, and merely duplicate what others have already learned. But they are mine, and they keep me bumping along, not so smoothly at time, but nevertheless, onward.

Perhaps the most difficult thing of all has been to learn the careful dance of leadership that tells me my role in the congregations. It turns out that what small churches want from their pastor is entirely different from what larger ones, like the ones I’ve always attended, want from theirs. Like any family, my churches want most of all to be nurtured, to have their memories and their successes celebrated, and to be carefully and lovingly taught something new, occasionally.

When all is said and done, after an undergraduate degree in Leadership Studies, plenty of student leadership experience, like my opportunity to serve on the CBF/GA Coordinating Council, and critical thought about leadership, the inescapable fact of leadership is its relentless particularity. Just when you think you know the situation, it organically and inexplicably changes! Leading congregations requires constant attention. It fusses when it is neglected and does not enjoy the mandate to rest, even though it knows that rest is good for the communal and individual soul. And the supreme irony comes in the fact that leadership so often means doing nothing, staying out of the way, keeping silent. But, oh, what hard work that is when passions are flaring and hearts are racing!

Am I ready? Over and over again, God does not seem to be concerned with our readiness, merely with our willingness to learn, to be, and to lead by stumbling but sincere example. God’s readiness almost always supplants our own. What I did not know on that glorious May day when I graduated from Emory could have filled many volumes. But I am learning. I am learning.

Elizabeth Rickert

Pastor, Tar Wallet Baptist Church and Oak Grove Baptist Church, Cumberland, Virginia

Convergence provided me the opportunity to be shaped into a more effective leader

HOLISTIC LEADERSHIP development enables young ministers to respond to and plan for the challenges and opportunities that will invariably come in serving congregations. At the outset of my service in full-time ministry, I felt comfortable completing day-to-day tasks as minister of music but sensed that some essential element of my ministerial work was missing.

Recognizing my need for development as a young leader with only slightly more than a year in full-time ministry, I applied to be a part of Convergence. From the opening session in October 2005, Convergence provided me the opportunity to be shaped into a more effective leader.

Each of the four sessions of Convergence focuses on a different aspect of leadership development: leader's self-awareness, leadership setting, leadercraft skills, and leadership synthesis. Incorporating analytical tools, published resources, case studies, and first-hand experiences into the Convergence curriculum affords young leaders a healthy balance between the theoretical and the practical. Projects between sessions, such as reflective writing, self-evaluation, or strategic

planning, augment the reading and discussion during sessions and encourage us to use these newly learned tools in our individual ministry settings. Gifted facilitators Chris Gambill, consultant with the Center for Congregational Health, and Devita Parnell, Associate Coordinator for Congregational Life with CBF/GA, make possible each successful experience in leadership development through their thoughtful planning and depth of knowledge about ministry and leadership.

The peer community of young leaders I've developed through Convergence has also proved to be an invaluable resource. Each unique perspective illuminates my understanding of leadership and ministry. We confer about similar experiences in ministry and learn from one another's challenges and successes. For instance, I have struggled with successfully involving laity in the short-term and long-range leadership of the music ministry. Being able to discuss openly this and other issues with fellow young ministers enlightens my journey toward effective ministry leadership. Furthermore, as I begin to implement the strategies learned in Convergence, I now have a

new network of colleagues to call on for support.

In addition to leadership development for the young minister, Convergence also seeks to support the leader as a whole person. For me, such support came in our times of worship. I had in some respect lost sight of the importance of my personal and corporate worship life, an especially precarious situation for a minister of music who is called to lead others in worshipping God. Our times of corporate worship and quiet, personal reflection allowed me to rediscover in part something that I had been neglecting. Even as I continue to be empowered as a leader through Convergence, I am also renewed as a minister and as a Christian.

Young ministers have unique challenges as they begin careers in ministry, such as leading through congregational change, creating a healthy environment for ministry, and empowering other leaders. Convergence helps to call forth and develop the essential leadership skills of the young minister. Completing two of the four sessions of Convergence has certainly benefited me, but it is also an investment in the congregation I serve now, as well as any I may serve in the future, because I have gained tools and understanding for effective leadership in Christian ministry.

Marty Watts
*Minister of Music,
First Baptist Church,
Griffin*



Peer Learning Group

LAST SUMMER, I CALLED the CBF/GA office about participating in a Peer Learning Group. As a pastor, I felt like I was becoming a bit stagnant in my ministry. They were very encouraging and asked me if I would consider convening a new Peer Learning Group. When I agreed, they provided me with a list of pastors in the Middle Georgia area. Soon we had a commitment of four other pastors and a new Peer Learning Group had begun.

Of course, every Peer Learning Group charts its own course. Our group has mostly been a support group, in

which we share current experiences ... both positive and negative. I have gained new insights for ministry, and after every meeting I come away feeling that I have invested my time well. My Peer Learning Group has helped me to intentionally reflect on my present ministry and Christian ministry in general.

I'm grateful to my colleagues and CBF/GA for this experience. If you're not in a group, I urge you to contact Devita Parnell at the CBF/GA office (dparnell@cbfga.org) right away and let her help you get connected.

Don McClung
Pastor, First Baptist Church of Hawkinsville

Residency Program

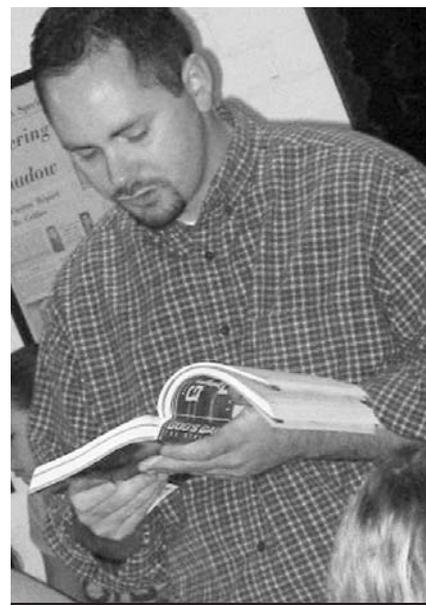
IN MAY OF 2005, I knew I was going to be catapulted from the world of academia into the “real” world. A graduating student from Mercer University’s McAfee School of Theology, I was apprehensive about the unknown, but excited about the opportunities that did await me. I did not just wait for graduation day to come, but sent resumes, calling on the services of both McAfee’s job placement service and the help of CBF’s Reference and Referral system. I had several interviews but did not feel a strong call to any of those churches.

One day, I received a call from First Baptist of Dalton. Ronnie Kiehm, Minister to Youth and Students, had received my name and was interested in talking about a new position they were creating. FBC Dalton decided to become a “teaching” church. This means that they wanted to draft graduating students and give them an intense practical training by having them work with someone who has years of experience in a chosen area. Based on a concept similar to that of a doctor’s residency in a hospital, FBC Dalton envisions one day having a resident under each area of ministry.

They called me to be the first Youth Resident, and I quickly accepted.

This program is shaping me greatly. Every day I discover something new or am exposed to an idea or obstacle that I have not thought of. I am learning what qualities are my strengths and realizing that sometimes what I thought were my strengths are my weaknesses. One thing I’ve discerned is that my knowledge of computers and audio/visual equipment can be used in the church to convey ideas and solve many every day problems. The best thing about the residency program is that I am in a safe environment that cares about me and helps push me forward. I meet with Ronnie Kiehm regularly to bounce around ideas and evaluate my performance, youth needs, and how I can become a better minister for Christ.

I know several churches that are following this model — becoming teaching churches. My McAfee education combined with a two-year residency enhances what I have learned in the classroom. It gives me a place to reinforce my seminary experience, putting into practice all that I learned. Being part of the inner



Joe McKee during devotion time at the Breakfast Club.

workings of a church for two years gives me an advantage over a two-month internship by being involved with large-scale projects such as summer camps and retreats from beginning through completion.

In the near future, I hope to see more churches putting this concept into action. For me, this residency is an invaluable opportunity through which I learn what my ministry style and gifts are and how they can best be used for the ministry of Jesus Christ!

I would like to thank the people of FBC Dalton for their support and to the wonderful staff I work with. I am also grateful to CBF/GA for the financial assistance they gave to fund this residency. Thank you all for this growing opportunity!

Joe McKee

*Ministry Resident to Youth and Students
jmckee@firstbaptistdalton.com*

NOTE: The Shiloh Network was launched on February 22 to foster a “culture of call” among Baptist churches across the U.S., including several from Georgia, have joined the network, pledging to join together to recruit and encourage young people to enter Baptist ministry. For more information on the Shiloh Network, contact Dawn Hall at the Center for Congregational Health at dhall@wfubmc.edu or at 336-716-9722. The Network will also be featured at the National CBF General Assembly in June.

CBF /GA Internship

WHEN I FIRST asked about interning for CBF/GA I was looking for an internship to fulfill my requirements for graduation. Little did I know that I would gain much more than academic credit from my experience at CBF/GA. Interning for CBF/GA has been an incredibly rewarding and educational opportunity.

My main task at CBF/GA was to assist the CBF/GA Associate Coordinator for Congregational Life. Through helping, I have learned that there is much behind-the-scenes work done in order to make programs run smoothly. Programs sponsored by CBF/GA require thorough planning and preparation. Not only have I learned many of the tasks involved in Congregational Life, but I have also gotten a taste of the work involved in Communication and Resources, as well as Administration.



I now have a better understanding of what CBF is about, who they serve, and why they serve. The CBF/GA internship has allowed me to gain a better perspective of ministry outside of the church. It has also led me to further define my vocational calling to ministry.

Rachel Britt CBF/GA Intern and Senior, Mercer University

Resource Wise

Call Waiting: God's Invitation to Youth, By Larry McSwain and Kay Shurden Interview with the Authors

Q Why do you think the topic of vocational calling is important?

A **Larry:** Calling is essential to Christian faith. Throughout Scripture, God is calling out people to commit their lives to respond to God's call, investing themselves in God's mission in the world.

Kay: Our calling shapes our lives. It captures our imagination and energy and channels them in a specific direction and that is where much of our meaning comes from. Calling includes every aspect of our lives — our relationships, our work, our spiritual lives.

Q What prompted you to write this book?

A **Larry:** I have long felt that understanding God's call is an important part of faith pilgrimage for youth, and the teenage years are formative for charting a direction toward one's life pilgrimage. I was called to ministry as a teenager. When I had the opportunity to research vocation as a Senior Fellow as a part of Mercer University's Lilly Grant on vocation in 2002-2003, I wanted to develop a resource for youth.

Q For whom is the book written?

A **Kay:** This book is written for young people who are beginning to ask themselves, "What am I going to do with my life?" It helps them look at some indicators of where their passion lies.

Q Does the language of "call" and "vocation" speak to today's youth?

A **Kay:** I think so, if they hear the language at church and from their parents. We started to name the book, *God's Invitation To You*, because we were trying to say that God is inviting them to a life of adventure and passion. I think young people respond to that.

Larry: Yes. Vocation is from the Latin *vocare*—to call, and is the same thing as calling. God's call is an essential part of the Biblical message and is timeless. Individuals and communities are continuously being called to "Follow me" in the same way Jesus called his disciples to follow him.

Q What is the church's role in helping youth discern their calling?

A **Larry:** Its first role is to proclaim the meaning of God's call. One cannot read the stories of Moses, Deborah, Jeremiah, Isaiah, Mary, Jesus, Paul, and the host of biblical people without emphasizing God's call. Second, churches need to provide resources of education about

both the importance of responding to God's call and the opportunities to serve as a follower of Christ. Finally, youth need support and encouragement in their responsiveness to their individual callings.

Q How would you encourage a minister or parent to talk about calling with a youth?

A **Kay:** I think questions about what the youth thinks needs to be done in the world, or what is God's dream for the world, and then follow that up with, "What do you feel you could do as part of that dream?" "How could you partner with God to make the world a better place?" I think the book could be a follow-up to that conversation.

Q How would you encourage a young person to discern God's call for his/her life?

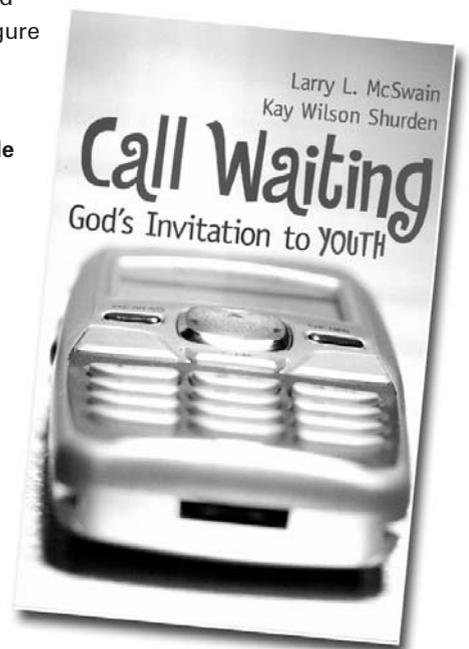
A **Larry:** By being open and seeking to understand one's call. It is important to talk to parents, grandparents, pastors, and other adults about their life pilgrimages and how they have found God's leadership. It is an important ministry of the whole church to encourage their youth to develop into committed adult disciples.

Q What are some of the challenges that youth and young adults face in discerning their call?

A **Kay:** I think the biggest challenge may be to respond to a calling rather than choose a career. The latter is a response to what the job can do for you in terms of compensation, prestige, and the American question of "What's in it for me?" The challenge is to take a look at the places of need and injustice and figure out what each of us can do about it.

Q What people or experiences were helpful to you in your call discernment process?

A **Larry:** I grew up in a small church that emphasized the invitation to "full-time Christian vocation" as a part of its weekly



invitation. At the same time my pastor took a great deal of personal interest in me and I admired him greatly. As I became a teenager, the question of how I was to live my life vocationally was ever present and I sought to understand that pretty much on my own. I also had a strong mystical experience of calling to ministry that I cannot explain.

Kay: A person who influenced me as a youth was the deaconess in my Methodist Church. She was a woman of great kindness who gave of her time and attention to the youth of our church. She made me feel like I had something to give to God, that I mattered.

Q What is the church's response to the growing disillusionment of full-time ministry?

A **Larry:** Two things: healthy churches and healthy ministers. Churches do not recognize the negative messages they send to youth by their internal conflicts and failures. Nothing will encourage youth more than to participate in a congregation on mission and alive with the presence of God's Spirit. Ministry is a challenging vocation and we need ministers who love what they are doing to encourage others to consider ministry as a vocation. Some view other vocations as more fulfilling than ministry when every vocation has its unique challenges.

Q What is the most positive thing a church can do to nurture a sense of purpose in its youth?

A **Kay:** Give them opportunities to use their gifts. Encourage them to look seriously at what their passions are in life and then look at the needs of the world. Allow adults in the church to share what their vocation means to them. The church is full of people who have many different callings and youth can learn from them.

Q Based on your experience and observation, what are keys to finding fulfillment in work?

A **Kay:** Find your passion, what you get lost in doing, what seems like play rather than work, and see how that can be used to make the world a better place. Realize that your vocation can change during different periods of your life; mine certainly did. Be flexible and courageous and follow the leading of your heart. ■

Additional Resources

Churches interested in inviting seminary students to promote ministry as a vocational calling can call Larry McSwain at McAfee School of Theology at 678-547-6442 or email him at mcswain_ll@mercer.edu.

Vocational Discovery

The Choice: Choosing A Life that Matters (youth curriculum) (Smyth & Helwys).

Under the Unpredictable Plant: An Exploration in Vocational Holiness, Eugene Peterson (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2001).

Do I Belong in Seminary?, Ronald E. Parker (The Alban Institute, Inc., 1998).

Let Your Life Speak: Listening for the Voices of Vocation, Parker Palmer (Jossey-Bass, 2000).

Live Your Calling: A Practical Guide to Finding and Fulfilling Your Mission in Life, Kevin and Kay Marie Brennfleck (Jossey-Bass, 2004).

Congregational Leadership

Congregations (Periodical) (The Alban Institute).

Leadership Without Easy Answers, Ronald A. Heifetz (Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1994).

Leading Change, John P. Kotter (Harvard Business School Press, 1995).

Leading Congregational Change: A Practical Guide for the Transformational Journey, Jim Herrington, Mike Bonem, James H. Furr (Jossey-Bass, 2000).

Effective Church Leadership: Building on the Twelve Keys, Kennon L. Callahan (Jossey-Bass, 1990).

Leading Women: How Church Women Can Avoid Leadership Traps and Negotiate the Gender Maze, Carol E. Becker (Abingdon Press, 1995).

The Leadership Labyrinth: Negotiating the Paradoxes of Ministry, Judson Edwards (Smyth & Helwys).

Selecting Church Leaders: A Practice in Spiritual Discernment, Charles Olsen and Ellen Morseth (The Alban Institute, 2002).

The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make A Big Difference, Malcolm Gladwell (Little, Brown and Company, 2002).

Creating A Healthier Church: Family Systems Theory, Leadership, and Congregational Life, Ronald Richardson (Fortress Press, 1996).

Becoming a Healthier Pastor, Ronald Richardson (Fortress Press, 2005).

Good to Great, Jim Collins (Collins, 2001).

The University Campus: Tomorrow's Moderate Baptists

THE COOPERATIVE BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP, in conjunction with CBF/GA and The Center for Baptist Studies at Mercer University, will host a conference, "The University Campus: Tomorrow's Moderate Baptists," May 4-5 at First Baptist Church of Decatur, GA.

"This is an event to try and raise moderate Baptist awareness of the need for collegiate ministry," said Bruce Gourley, Associate Director of The Center for Baptist Studies at Mercer University. "College years for our Baptist students are a significant time for shaping who they are, what their call is, and what they will do with their call."

Conference coordinators — Gourley, CBF Leadership Development Coordinator Terry Hamrick, CBF/GA Coordinator Frank Broome, CBF/GA Associate Coordinator for Congregational Life Devita Parnell, and The Center for Baptist Studies Executive Director Walter B. Shurden recognized a need for a greater CBF presence in college communities and on college campuses. "We're trying to develop leaders," Broome said. "We've got to start where high school and college students are. This is about the future of local congregations and the future of CBF."

The conference is aimed at moderate Baptist leaders throughout the nation. Organizers hope the conference will serve as a catalyst for collegiate ministry and encourage concrete actions at the local church level.

"It is my belief that if moderate Baptists are truly going to be effective in developing campus ministry, the local church must get involved," Gourley said.

The event includes Fellowship coordinators from around

the nation, CBF church leaders and educators from Campbell University, Baylor University, Carson-Newman College, and others.

"It really is a way to bring this issue to the forefront and then to lift up various models that we can all learn from and adapt to each of our situations," Parnell said.

Topics for panel discussions include "Mission Field or Stumbling Block for Moderate Baptists?," "Empowering Local Churches for Collegiate Missions," and "Discovering, Developing, and Nurturing Leaders."

Panel speakers include Daniel Vestal, CBF/National Coordinator; Tim Willis, Minister of Students and Singles at First Baptist Church of Clemson, SC; John Upton, Executive Director of the Virginia Baptist Mission Board; Ruth Perkins Lee, Minister of College Students and Youth at First Baptist Church of Auburn, AL, and many others.

"The relationships between colleges, denominations, and congregations continue to change," Hamrick said. "This event is an opportunity for the moderate Baptist movement to focus on the critical need of ministering to and with college students. I hope that we can find new energy and new strategies for impacting the college campus and the college student."

The conference is free and registration is by email only. For more information and to register, visit www.centerforbaptiststudies.org/conferences/index.htm.

Courtney Hodges

CBF/National Communications

THE UNIVERSITY CAMPUS: TOMORROW'S MODERATE BAPTISTS

May 4-5, 2006 • First Baptist Church, Decatur, GA

308 Clairemont Ave, Decatur, GA 30030-2506

For complete details and to register visit: www.centerforbaptiststudies.org/conferences/index.htm

Schedule for Thursday

1:30 Welcome

1:45 Opening Address

R. Kirby Godsey, President, Mercer University

2:15 Panel Presentation/Discussion

Collegiate Ministers • "The University Campus: Mission Field or Stumbling Block for Moderate Baptists?"

4:40 Small Groups

5:30 Dinner

7:00 Panel Presentation/Discussion

University Pastors • "The University Campus: Local Church Models"

*Conference to Promote Collegiate Ministry
Among Moderate Baptists*

Schedule for Friday

7:45 Breakfast

8:30 Opening Address

Terry Hamrick, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship
"The University Campus: Discovering, Developing, and Nurturing Leaders"

8:45 Panel Presentation/Discussion

Professors of Religion • "The University Campus: Moderate Baptist Opportunities From My Perspective"

9:45 Break

10:00 Panel Presentation/Q & A

Moderate Baptist Leaders • Topic: "The University Campus: Partnering with Local Churches for Collegiate Missions"

11:00 Closing Challenge

John Pierce, Executive Editor, *Baptists Today*, Macon, GA



Making a Difference

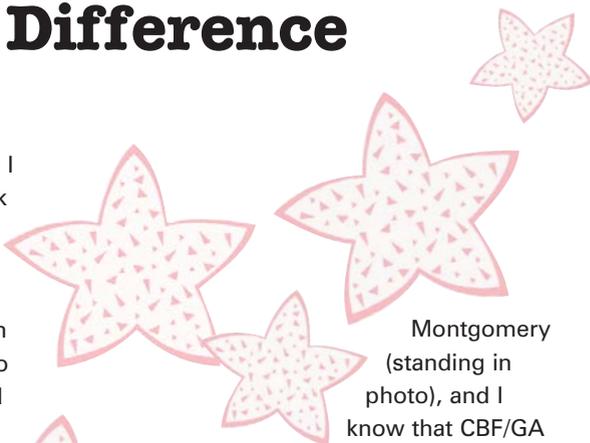
THE ILLUSTRATION is so old, I almost hate to use it but I think it really applies in this case.

It's the story of the little girl walking along the beach and seeing hundreds of star fish on the beach. They were going to die because they had washed up so far on the beach and couldn't get to the water. As she walked along the beach she would reach down and pick up a star fish and throw it back into the water. There was an old man walking along behind her and he was watching her as she picked up a star fish and threw it in the water.

They had walked several miles and finally the old man stopped the little girl and asked her what she was doing. "You can't possibly save all the star fish on the beach for there are miles of beach to cover yet. You cannot possibly make a difference by saving every star fish on the beach." The little girl reached down, picked up another star fish, and threw it into the ocean. She looked up at the cynical old man and said, "I saved that one." I have been asked on numerous occasions how I thought Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Georgia could really make a difference in Taliaferro County. I have been asked by close friends if I get discouraged. The truth is that there are times I do get discouraged.

My personal answer to the question, "How can you possibly make a difference?," is that you make a difference one person at time. I look at the picture of these two young women, Angelicia Harper (seated in photo) and Janika

Montgomery of Taliaferro County



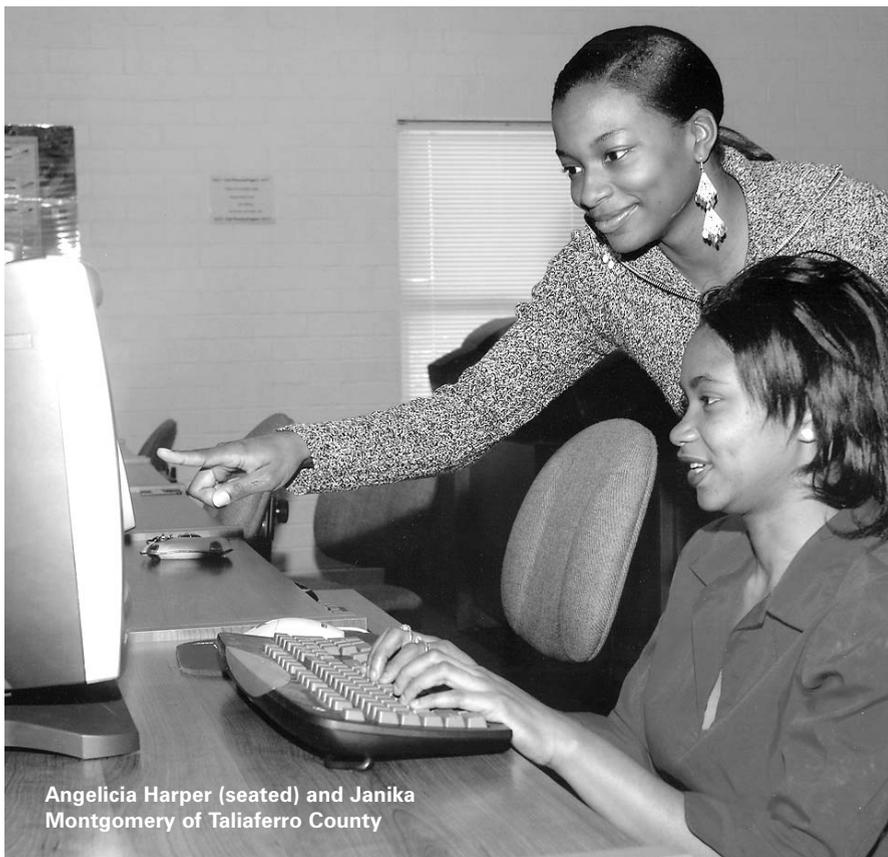
Montgomery (standing in photo), and I know that CBF/GA and Touching Taliaferro With Love have made a difference. These two young women could never have gone to college if we, CBF/GA, had not decided to invest our time, energy, and resources in the children of Taliaferro County. The truth is, it has taken longer than I had ever dreamed it

would take. Our task of changing children's lives is far more complicated than I had ever dreamed. These two women are the future of Taliaferro County. They are a symbol to the rest of the student body at Taliaferro County Schools that you do have a chance to be a success.

Over the period of five years, hundreds of volunteers and numerous churches have invested in Taliaferro County. I am proud to say that you have made a difference in Taliaferro County's children. Thank you for your strong vision and commitment to change. It has been a great experience serving through CBF/GA.

Jimmy Lewis
Missions Coordinator, CBF/GA
jlewis@cbfga.org

How can you possibly make a difference?
... one person at a time



Angelicia Harper (seated) and Janika Montgomery of Taliaferro County

Opportunities / Updates / Reports

Updates



Jennifer McClung (left in photo) from Peachtree Baptist Church and a 2nd Year McAfee Student, along with **Rosie Stafford** from FBC Auburn "clean-up" at Northwoods Baptist Church.

Bobby Jones of FBC Rome and a student at Georgia College and State University (Front of picture), and **Josh Caldwell**, a student at Georgia Southern University, prepare for the afternoon Bible Club at the Moncrief Baptist Center in downtown Atlanta.



Alysha Keyser, Mercer student and member of Highland Hills Baptist Church, Macon, shared these comments, "Now Serving was a great experience for me. I helped scrape paint at a small church, and even though it was cold and wet, I had a lot of fun. Knowing that I helped that church, even a tiny bit, was very fulfilling. I also had the opportunity to join in a worship service for the Russian congregation. Even though I didn't understand much of the sermon, experiencing how a different group of my Christian brothers and sisters worship was amazing."

Even though I didn't understand much of the sermon, experiencing how a different group of my Christian brothers and sisters worship was amazing."

Now Serving Atlanta, the first annual collegiate mission event sponsored by McAfee School of Theology and CBF/GA, was held on February 4. The event was a huge success with over 90 students gathering on Mercer's Atlanta Campus to register and serve in



ten urban ministry sites around Atlanta. Twenty McAfee students and alumni volunteered to help coordinate ministry sites, meals, and worship. **Brandon Reynolds** and **Amy Shorner** of Athens led in experiential worship to conclude the event. Students were challenged to explore their sense of vocational calling as well as seek out additional opportunities to serve. CBF/GA offers several opportunities for college students to spend summers serving in missions around the state. McAfee School of Theology will be launching a Master of Divinity Degree with Concentration in Urban Ministry this fall.

"Knowing that I helped... even a tiny bit, was very fulfilling."

Now Serving Atlanta was originally intended to be a small event for churches in the Atlanta Metro area. It grew outside the state of Georgia and included students from Auburn, Clemson, and Furman, as well as Georgia Southern and Mercer. In total, 15 different colleges and 15 churches were represented.

Ryan A. Clark, Assistant Director of Admissions, McAfee School of Theology
3001 Mercer University Drive, Atlanta, GA 30341
678-547-6451

2006 Summer Ministry Opportunities

(Compiled by CBF/GA)

Summer Children's Worker

FBC Toccoa

Contact: Art Conway (minister of education) or Jim Nelson (pastor) at 706-886-6822 or fbctoccoa@alltel.net.

Responsibilities:

- Leading one major activity each week for both younger and older children.
- Participating in and holding some responsibility in Vacation Bible School (but not director).
- Planning and leading an end of the summer camp/retreat experience for older children (perhaps a Thursday – Saturday event).
- Participating in worship through leading children's sermons (5-7 minutes).
- Assisting in children's Sunday School as requested and available.
- If musically trained or equipped, leading older children in a simple end-of-summer musical presentation.

Student Ministry Intern

FBC Griffin

Contact: Hambric Brooks 770-227-5517 or hambricbrooks@bellsouth.net.

Responsibilities: Serve youth grades 6-12 under the direct supervision of the Minister of Students.

Must have completed two years of college or the equivalent.

**Summer CBF Intern
CBF of Florida**

10 weeks any time between May 15 and August 15.
Room and Board provided by the host church.

Contact: Tommy Deal tdeal@floridacbf.org.

Responsibilities: Assist different churches in their outreach and ministries to their communities.

**Summer Student Ministry Intern
Mt. Zion Baptist Church, Macon, GA**

8-20 weeks, 10-30 hours a week.
Free Housing provided by church member, mileage reimbursement, book allowance, and free Wednesday night supper. This is a non-paid position.

Contact: Lance Merritt lance@zstudents.com or 7015 Rivoli Rd., Macon, GA 31210.

People and Places



CBF/GA received this poster from children in the Rockmart area after receiving school supplies during the fall of 2005. **Grace Fellowship of Rockmart**, as you might remember from a previous *Re-Visions*

e-newsletter, sent out a request for supplies. The supplies were distributed to neighborhood children attending the church.

Financial Picture

2005-2006 Year-to-Date
June 1, 2005 – February 28, 2006

Budget Requirement	\$483,750.00
Undesignated Receipts	\$474,987.52
Over/<Under>	\$<8,762.48>
Designated Receipts	\$111,479.86



**Georgia Baptist College of Nursing
of Mercer University**
and the
Gwinnett Hospital System
Congregational Ministry for Health and Wellness
are offering a

**CONGREGATIONAL NURSE
PREPARATION COURSE**

A six day residential program for RN's interested in beginning parish nurse or health ministry role

**Timber Ridge Conference Center
Mableton, Georgia
July 9-14, 2006**

\$800 (includes materials, lodging, and meals)
CE: 39 contact hours through the
Georgia Nurses Association

For more information contact:

Shirley Rawlins, APRN, BC, DSN
(770) 949-0217 srrawl@bellsouth.net

or

Linda Hughes, RN
(678) 442-2423 lg Hughes@ghsnet.org

Can You Help Us 'Connect the Dots?'

DID YOU EVER PLAY "connect the dots"? What seemed like unrelated marks on a page, when connected in the right order, produced the "big picture," as if by magic.

We need your help in "connecting the dots" in Reference and Referral for CBF/GA.

We receive many more resumes from Associate Pastors and Ministers of Education seeking churches than we do requests from churches seeking to fill these positions. On the other hand, we receive far more requests from churches seeking Ministers of Children/Youth than we receive resumes from those seeking these combination positions.

If you know of churches seeking Associate Pastors and/or Ministers of Educations, or if you know of candidates who would consider the combination positions of children/youth, please let us know. This will help us "connect the dots" in order that we may help others see "the big picture" in their respective ministries.



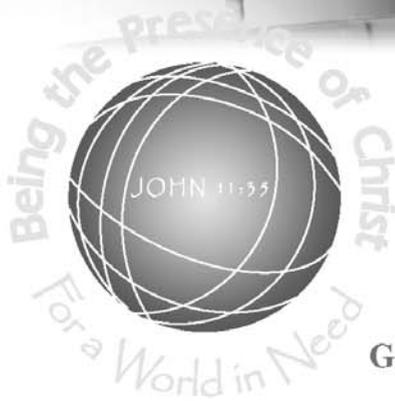
Thank you,

Alan Mitchell

Reference & Referral of CBF/GA, amitchell@cbfga.org



Joy Yee,
featured speaker
CBF moderator



2006 General Assembly

General Sessions – June 22-23

Auxiliary Events – June 21 & 24

Georgia World Congress Center, Atlanta, Ga.

Highlights



Trevor Hudson
featured speaker
a call to justice
and mercy



Al Staggs
worship leader
dramatic gospel
interpretations



C. Michael Hawn
artist in residence
worship arts from
around the world



Alicia Walker
worship planner
intentional focus
on worship

Worship opportunities • HIV/AIDS Summit, Wed. & Thurs.

Theological Education Banquet, Wed.

Companions in Christ Training, Sat.

National Hispanic Gathering, Sat.

There is no charge to attend the General Assembly.

Register and reserve your hotel room at www.thefellowship.info.

Cooperative Baptist Fellowship 

www.thefellowship.info

(800) 352-8741

March 3-4 • First Baptist Church, Athens

CBF/GA 2006 General Assembly Memories

THE 2006 CBF/GA SPRING GENERAL ASSEMBLY was a big hit thanks to the good work of the CBF/GA program committee and the program participants. Over five hundred people gathered for worship and a variety of breakout sessions. A special word of thanks to the FBC of Athens for the excellent work done in hosting the event.

Photos by Bruce Gourley



Attendees enjoy numerous exhibits, wonderful music, and lots of fellowship with each other.



Frank Broome thanks Al Shauf, 2005-2006 Moderator, for his hard work.



Bill Ross, Pastor of FBC, Athens, welcomes everyone to FBC and to Athens.



Renée Bennett accepts position as the new 2006-2007 Moderator.



Jim Dant challenges worshippers to understand the true meaning of grace.



The Exhibit Hall is always a favorite for attendees.

Coming Up!

April 22

Baptist Women in Ministry Spring Meeting
New Heights Baptist Church, Macon, GA
10:30 a.m. worship; cost \$15

Luncheon, business meeting, and awards presentation after worship.
Email Karen Pennings at kap1003@yahoo.com or call 478-714-0380 or 478-633-1527 for additional information.

April 24-25

"Spiritual Formation in Congregational Life": A Theological Discussion
Featuring Molly Marshall and Craig McMahon

For information or to register email Dawn Hall at dmhall@wfubmc.edu or call 336-716-9722, Mercer University, Macon.

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)

Email Devita Parnell at dparnell@cbfga.org or Bruce T. Gourley at Gourley_BT@Mercer.edu for more information.

June 11-16 June 18-23

Touching Taliaferro with Love (TTWL) Day Camp

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

June 22-23

CBF-National General Assembly
Georgia World Congress Center, Atlanta, GA

Visit www.thefellowship.info for information.

June 25-28

Summer Retreat for Vocational Formation
"Tapestry" www.healthychurch.org

Intricately Woven—Wonderfully Made (Psalm 139)
A vocational formation retreat for high school juniors and seniors.
Contacts: Beth Kennett at 336-227-0287 or Dawn M. Hall at dmhall@wfubmc.edu or 336-716-0459.

June 26-29

TTWL Baseball Camp

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

June 28-July 01

PASSPORTkids!
Wesleyan College, Macon, GA

Visit passport-kids.org for information.

September 11-13

Spiritual Formation Regional Retreat
Kavanaugh Life Enrichment Center, Louisville, KY

To register visit the fellowship's website at www.thefellowship.info/.
For information email Rick Bennett at rbennett@thefellowship.info or call 770-220-1605.

Sept. 24-26

2006 Mercer Preaching Consultation
King & Prince Resort, St. Simons Island, GA

Visit theology.mercer.edu/calendar/special_events.html for details as they are finalized.

Nov. 5-6

CBF/GA Fall Convocation
First Baptist Church of Christ, Macon

Dec. 29, 2006-Jan. 02, 2007

Antiphony

For information visit www.thesamuelproject.org/.

2007

January 8-10

Spiritual Formation Regional Retreat
Simpsonwood Conference Center, Atlanta, GA

To register visit the fellowship's website at www.thefellowship.info/.
For information email Rick Bennett at rbennett@thefellowship.info or call 770-220-1605.

CBF/GA...enabling the people of God who are committed to historic Baptist principles to carry out the Great Commission under the Lordship of Jesus Christ in a fellowship where every Christian has the freedom and the responsibility to exercise God's gift and calling.

COOPERATIVE
BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP

GEORGIA

P.O. Box 4343
Macon GA 31208-4343



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