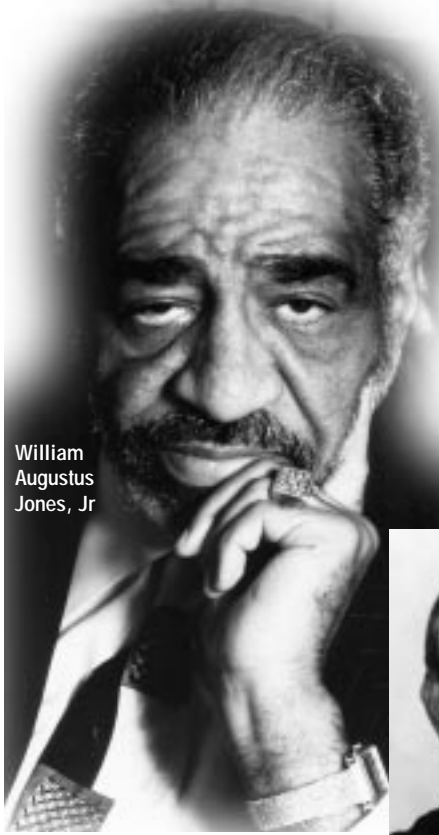


# VISIONS



Jan/Feb '01

## Where *Baptist* Still Means *Freedom*



William Augustus Jones, Jr



Bob Setzer



Ron and Ina Winstead

**CBF of Georgia General Assembly**  
**March 2-3, Augusta First Baptist Church**

*Georgia's annual assembly with inspiring speakers  
and informational breakout sessions.*

*See inside for details.*

**March Mission Madness** March 23-25, 2001



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## from the Moderator

### Where Baptist Stills Means Freedom

Baptists were born out of a desire for freedom—freedom from persecution, freedom from state control, and freedom of religion. In this country, being Baptist meant you were fighting for a cause, usually involving the freedom to believe or worship the way you felt was best. We have been diverse, and we have cherished our freedom.

In his book *A History of the Baptists*, Robert Torbet states: "The people called Baptists have their roots within what may be called the Free Church movement, which found variant expression throughout the history of Christianity. Although the term cannot be defined strictly, it is useful to describe the effort of Christians of varying theological beliefs and ecclesiastical backgrounds to restore the New Testament emphasis upon a Spirit-filled community of faith. In essence, the Free Church ideal stressed the necessity of a person-to-person confrontation with God, and so placed only secondary emphasis upon liturgy formalism, organization and creedalism in its hardened form."

January through March is without a doubt the busiest time of the year for us. We are getting ready for the March meeting in Augusta. It will prove to be a wonderful time. Our speakers are excellent and the breakout sessions are shaping up to be very interesting.

The Education, Fellowship, Missions and Partnership Avenues that help govern our work have been meeting, preparing budget requests for the coming year. We are likely to see a significant increase in the budget because we are moving toward hiring a Missions Coordinator.

A number of churches are increasing their giving to meet this need. All of this means that we will see increased work in the areas of new church starts and mission projects.

We are getting serious about supporting the

For our ancestors, it was important to struggle for the issues cherished by them. As a free church, the emphasis was placed on the priesthood of the believer (a person-to-person confrontation with God) and a diverse community of faith (varying theological beliefs and ecclesiastical backgrounds).

Today, Baptists have given up much of their freedom in place of control, pastoral authority and creedalism, with emphasis on worship style and organizational structure. Baptists have taken on a new look—one which does not resemble Baptists.

"Where Baptist Still Means Freedom" is the theme as we host our General Assembly at Augusta First Baptist Church on March 2-3, 2001. Please join us as we tackle these issues and reaffirm ourselves as the Baptists our ancestors fought so hard to preserve. We will celebrate our heritage, connect with old friends, and make decisions to shape our future. See you in Augusta.

—Becky Matheny, CBF of Georgia Moderator

## Frankly speaking



National CBF General Assembly in Atlanta, June 28-30, 2001. The national steering committee is at work finalizing plans.

This is going to be a great 10th anniversary celebration. Our people need to be there to experience the joy of this occasion, and to be inspired about the future of CBF.

I need people in each church generating interest. I hope we can have 3,000 Georgians at the World Congress Center, June 28-30, 2001. Please mark your calendars. Call Connections at 800-262-9974 for hotel information. We need your help to make a statement about the presence of CBF in Georgia.

I hope to see you in Augusta in March and Atlanta in June.

—Frank Broome, CBF of Georgia Coordinator



### **Johns Creek to host Christian educators gathering**

The Center for Christian Education will sponsor a Gathering for Christian Educators at Johns Creek Baptist Church, March 19-21, 2001. This event is designed for Christian educators who serve in churches in the roles of Ministers of Education, Age-Group Ministers, and other education staff positions. A series of interactive sessions will form the event dealing with the following issues: Balance, Wellness and Wholeness in Ministry; Staff Relationships; Dealing with Different People; Future Trends; and Things Working in Your Church. For more information, contact Bo Prosser toll free at 877-772-8291 or [bozo64@charlotte.infi.net](mailto:bozo64@charlotte.infi.net).

### **Peachtree Baptist Church ends support of SBC and GBC**

Atlanta's oldest Southern Baptist affiliated church will now fulfill its missionary calling by working with the CBF and the CBF of Georgia. Peachtree Baptist Church has officially severed its ties to the Southern Baptist Convention and Georgia Baptist Convention by completely de-funding the SBC and the GBC from the church budget. Actions were taken in church conference on Wednesday, November 15, 2000.

The church, which was founded in 1847, cites doctrinal differences with the SBC and GBC as the root cause of this action. The revisions to the Baptist Faith and Message, which has traditionally been held as a confession

of common beliefs among Baptists, has not been well received by this historic congregation.

Key problematic issues cited by the church include:

- The elevation of Scripture over Jesus Christ as supreme revelation of God
- The elimination of Jesus Christ as the criterion by which to interpret Scripture
- The betrayal of local church autonomy
- The undermining of the doctrine of the "priesthood of all believers"
- The couched denial of God's sovereignty
- The proposed use of the new Baptist Faith and Message as a creedal standard to which all SBC employees, missionaries, and trustees must subscribe

Peachtree Baptist Church members have been displeased with the fundamentalist leadership of the convention since that group took power in 1979. Peachtree Baptist Church was represented at the formation of the CBF in Atlanta in 1991 and has contributed to that organization since its inception. The church, which has been supporting missions through the SBC and CBF, will now support only CBF Global Missions, CBF of Georgia, and local causes with its missions dollars.

The church believes the SBC mission agencies, which have well over \$600 million dollars in reserve funds, will not be adversely affected by their decision.

It is thought that Peachtree Baptist Church is the first Atlanta church to withdraw from the SBC following similar moves by the First Baptist Church of Savannah last month and First Baptist Church of Athens earlier in the year. While the church had been prayerfully considering withdrawing support from the SBC for several

months, the decision to also end support of the GBC was made as a result of that group's decision to adopt the revised Baptist Faith and Message at their annual meeting in Savannah. Peachtree Baptist Church is the first GBC related church to end its support of the GBC over these issues. Peachtree was noted for another first in 1996 when it ordained the Rev. Harriett Tucker Watkins to the Gospel ministry. Rev. Watkins was the first African-American woman to be ordained by a SBC related church.

Pastor Robert Walker says, "While the severing of such historic ties is painful, it is also freeing. The SBC's public moral grandstanding, intolerance, and fundamentalist leadership have embarrassed many of our members in recent years. It is now obvious that the same theologically narrow mind set that forever changed the SBC beginning in 1979 has now metastasized in the GBC where the fundamentalists have seized control. It is important to note that this separation is not the result of any change in theology at Peachtree Baptist Church, rather we believe that the SBC and now the GBC have moved so far away from their traditional core beliefs that we can no longer support them. I can now feel good again about who we are as Baptists, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship Baptists, that is."

— *Robert H. Walker, Jr., Pastor  
Peachtree Baptist Church, Atlanta*

### **Jimmy Carter renounces Southern Baptist ties**

**Former President Jimmy Carter speaks out about Christian Index treatment of CBF of Georgia**

Carter told Associated Baptist Press the recent decision by directors of the Christian Index, the Georgia Baptist newspaper, to restrict articles and ads promoting the Cooperative Baptist



Fellowship, "is improper and a violation of freedom of press."

"The fact is that almost every one in Georgia who gives money to CBF is also giving to the Georgia Baptist Convention. And the Christian Index is supposed to represent all Georgia Baptists."

"I don't like that at all," he continued. "That's just a forerunner of things that are pending and just a further imposition of the creed...."

—from an article by Greg Warner  
Associated Baptist Press

### **Good Shepherd Clinic opens in Morrow**

The Good Shepherd Clinic, a free medical clinic for the uninsured, is the fruit of a partnership of Morrow First Baptist Church and First Presbyterian Church of Jonesboro.

Accepting patients since September 18, 2000, the clinic is located in a donated house behind FBC Morrow. The attending physician is contributing his time to care for the uninsured.

### **In memorium**

**Barbara Platt**, wife of **Wil Platt**, member of CBF of Georgia Coordinating Council and Vineville Baptist Church, Macon.

### **CBF GA financial picture**

- 2000-01 monthly budget requirement                      \$23,539.58
- November receipts                      \$36,486.30
- December receipts                      \$27,988.29

### **Georgia ranks #2 nationally in CBF giving**

"Church Contributions by State 1999-2000," published by national CBF, reports that Georgia was ranked number two in total contributions to CBF in 1999-2000, with gifts of \$2,354,317. Top contributing churches included FBC Decatur, FBC Dalton, FBC Columbus, Wieuca Road Baptist Church/Atlanta, Johns Creek Baptist Church/Alpharetta, FBC Gainesville, and Second-Ponce de Leon/Atlanta.

# March Mission Madness 2001

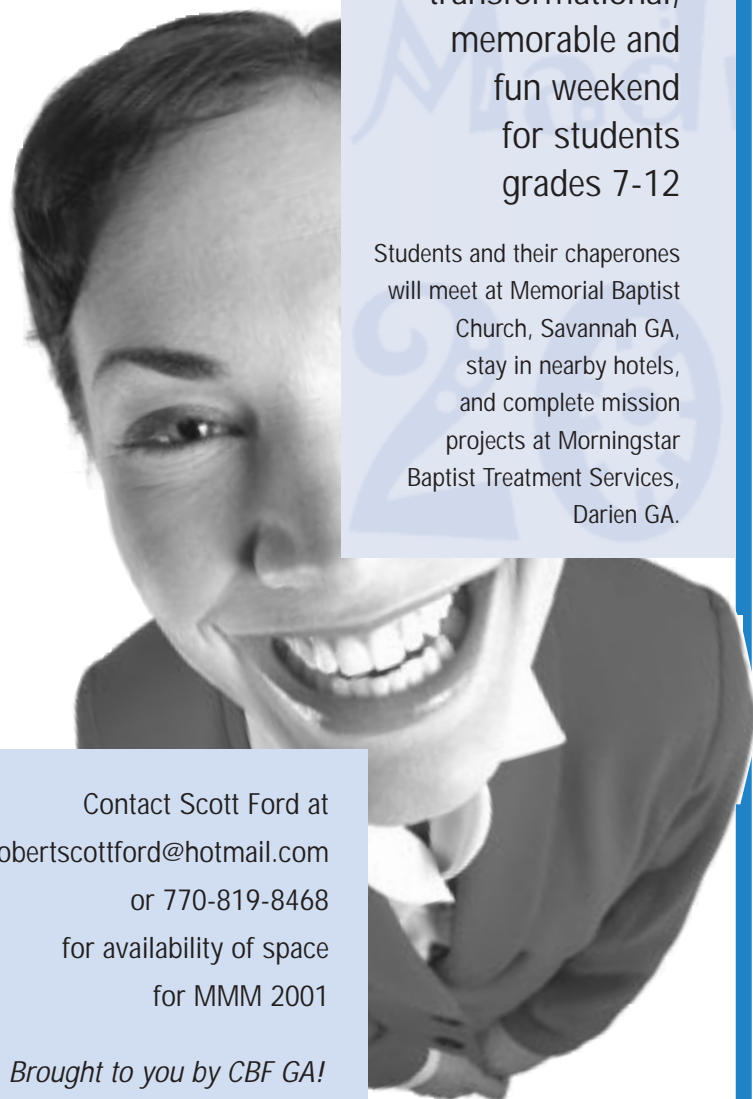
**March 23-25**

A meaningful, transformational, memorable and fun weekend for students grades 7-12

Students and their chaperones will meet at Memorial Baptist Church, Savannah GA, stay in nearby hotels, and complete mission projects at Morningstar Baptist Treatment Services, Darien GA.

Contact Scott Ford at  
robertscottford@hotmail.com  
or 770-819-8468  
for availability of space  
for MMM 2001

*Brought to you by CBF GA!*



# Where *Baptist* Still Means *Freedom*

Cooperative Baptist Fellowship  
of Georgia General Assembly  
March 2-3, 2001

AUGUSTA FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH  
3500 Walton Way, Augusta  
706-733-2236

## FRIDAY, MARCH 2

- 1:00 P.M. Registration
- 2:00 Breakout Session 1
- 3:15 Breakout Session 2
- 4:30 Panel Discussion
- 6:00 Dinner (*\$7 tickets purchased at door\**)
- 7:00 Worship  
Missionary Speakers Ron and Ina Winstead  
Speaker Bob Setzer, Pastor, Macon FBC

## SATURDAY, MARCH 3

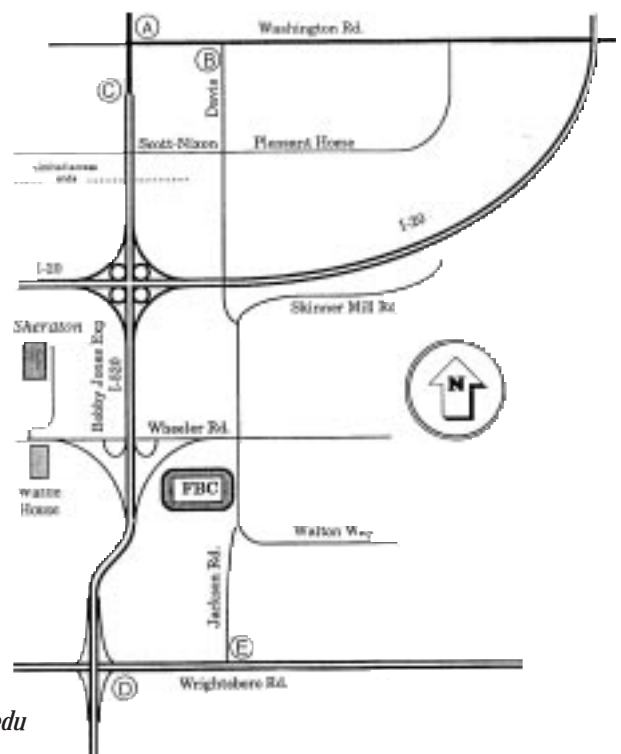
- 8:30 A.M. Business and Breakout Session 3
- 11:00 Worship  
Speaker William Augustus Jones, Jr., Pastor,  
Bethany Baptist Church, Brooklyn NY

*Child care provided*

## BREAKOUT SESSION SAMPLER

- Making All of Life a Prayer
- A Thoughtful Critique of the Revision of the Baptist  
Faith and Message
- What's New with CBF
- CBF Missions in China
- Choosing a Good Translation of the Bible
- The Celtic Way of Doing Evangelism

*\*For dinner reservations, 478-301-5926 or groover\_st@mercer.edu  
For hotels, call Connections 800-262-9974*



# CBF GA coming up!

## 2001

### February 12-14

The William H. Self Preaching Lectures  
McAfee School of Theology, Atlanta GA

Featuring William Willimon, Dean of the Chapel, Duke University, Durham NC.  
Call 770-986-3470.

### February 20-21

The Harry Vaughan Smith Lectures  
Newton Hall, Mercer University, Macon GA

February 20 at 10:50 a.m. and 7:30 p.m., February 21 at 10:00 a.m.  
Luke Timothy Johnson, the Robert W. Woodruff Professor of New Testament and Christian Origins, Candler School of Theology, Emory University, Atlanta GA  
"Lessons from the Past: A Patristic Interpretation of the New Testament"

### February 23-24

Making Good Marriages Better: Fairytales and Happily Ever Afters  
A Weekend Marriage Enrichment Experience

The Center for Christian Education

Johns Creek Baptist Church, Alpharetta GA

Keynote Speakers: Otis and Diegie Andrews. Cost is \$60 per couple, includes conference fee, three workshops and two meals. Overnight accommodations not included. Deadline February 21. Call Bo Prosser toll free 877-772-8291 or email [bozo64@charlotte.infi.net](mailto:bozo64@charlotte.infi.net).

### March 2-3

CBF of Georgia General Assembly  
First Baptist Church, Augusta GA

For speakers and breakout sessions, see inside for details.  
For hotels, call Connections 800-262-9974.

### March 8-10

CBF Children's Ministry Network Retreat  
San Antonio TX

An opportunity for children's ministers to network, share, and grow spiritually and professionally. Guest speaker is Bob Fulbright. Estimated cost \$60.00 plus hotel, transportation and some meals. Contact John Echols at [jecholstn@aol.com](mailto:jecholstn@aol.com) or Cathy Anderson at [canderson@fbca.net](mailto:canderson@fbca.net) or 828-252-4781.

### March 19-21

The True Survivors: A Gathering for Christian Educators  
The Center for Christian Education

Johns Creek Baptist Church, Alpharetta GA

Cost is \$50. Contact Bo Prosser toll free 877-772-8291 or [bozo64@charlotte.infi.net](mailto:bozo64@charlotte.infi.net).

### March 23-25

March Mission Madness

Morningstar Baptist Treatment Services, Darien GA

Georgia youth join in a weekend of praise and mission projects. Contact Scott Ford 770-819-8468 or [robertscottford@hotmail.com](mailto:robertscottford@hotmail.com).

### March 29-31

Adopt-A-People Training Conference

Memphis TN

Contact Tom and Beth Ogburn 800-782-2451 or [togburn@cbfnet.org](mailto:togburn@cbfnet.org).

### April 20

To the Women on My Journey

Baptist Women in Ministry of Georgia Spring Meeting

First Baptist Church, Rome GA

10:00 A.M. registration, 10:30 A.M. worship, 12:15 P.M. lunch, business, awards. Featured speaker is Priscilla Jones Tunnell. Cost \$15.00; your check is your reservation, send to Laura Willis, 2023 Deren Way, Atlanta GA 30345.

### April 23-26

The Chevis F. Horne Preaching & Worship Conference

Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond

Keynote speakers: William Willimon, Charles Poole, and Friedrich Wieser. Featuring plenary sessions, worship, seminars related to preaching and the work of ministry, and dialogue sessions with the keynote speakers. Registration is \$149.99 (\$99 for BTSR alumni/\$75 for spouses). Includes conference materials, three continental breakfasts, two lunches, and a banquet. A \$25 refundable deposit is requested. Contact Center for Preaching and Worship, BTSR, 3400 Brook Road, Richmond VA 23227. Or call 804-204-1241.

### June 28-30

CBF General Assembly

World Congress Center, Atlanta GA

Join in celebrating the 10th anniversary of CBF. Registration is not required.

Former President Jimmy Carter speaks at Friday night session.

For hotel reservations, call Connections at 800-262-9974.

Log on to [www.cbfonline.org](http://www.cbfonline.org) for periodic updates on all events!

### July 17-20

New Horizons Camp

New Ebenezer Retreat Center, Rincon GA

A missions camp for children who have completed third thru fifth grades. \$25 deposit due by March 31. Contact camp director Connie Campbell at 770-938-1688, ext. 19, or [ccampbell@fbctucker.org](mailto:ccampbell@fbctucker.org).

## 2001 Visions Deadlines...March 5 • April 30 • July 2 • September 4 • November 5

CBF of Georgia...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.

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