

# VISIONS



Jan/Feb '02

## 1992-2002

### **A Decade of Freedom and Faithfulness: The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Georgia**

*The following article is the first in a series recounting the first ten years of CBF of Georgia. Written by Robert G. Gardner, Senior Researcher in Baptist History at the Jack Tarver Library of Mercer University, the articles are a condensed version of a history of CBF of Georgia to be published in the anniversary year 2002. Look for excerpts in future issues of Visions 2002.*

**F**rom our beginnings, Baptists have actively favored the Lordship of Christ, the authority of the Bible over tradition, believer's baptism, the priesthood of all believers, the gathered and congregational church, local church autonomy that encourages connectionalism, the separation of church and state, and religious liberty. Nevertheless, from virtually the start here in Georgia, *diversity* has also marked our denominational life. It seems that, in this state as elsewhere, the only time that *Baptist* is singular is when we are talking about one Baptist.

Thus, Baptist life in Georgia has experienced several significant divisions. In the 1820s and 1830s the anti-missionary Baptists retained control of churches and associations already in existence or founded their own. Prior to the Civil War, the Cherokee Georgia Baptist Convention (1854-1864) emerged in northwest Georgia, chiefly as an expression of regionalism. After the war, regional loyalties gave rise to the North Georgia Baptist Convention (1878-1894) and the South Georgia Baptist Convention (1890-c.1898). Of course the most obvious division effectively started in 1865 when African-Americans in great numbers constituted their own churches and associations. Throughout the nineteenth century there were organizational disruptions in Georgia Baptist Convention fellowship.

The twentieth century saw major disagreements within Georgia Baptist life concerning evolution-modernism and biblical interpretation — particularly as related to Genesis — but no overt schisms.

This changed when the Southern Baptist Convention and state conventions in and after 1979 became increasingly

fundamentalist in their theology, hierarchical in their structure, and unyielding in their opposition to women in pastoral and other significant leadership roles. Consequently, moderate Georgia Baptists gradually felt repression as they increasingly lost national and state leadership positions. The political and theological climate became frigid.

Moderates began to respond in various informal and formal ways. Informally they experienced a sense of cohesion with friends made at college and/or seminary as they communicated in the halls and over coffee and meals while attending increasingly unsatisfactory meetings of the Southern and Georgia Baptist conventions. Beginning in 1989 an almost-annual retreat for moderate ministers and spouses has provided mutual support.

Formal networking came in the late 1980s and early 1990s as Georgia Baptists, Inc., and related movements achieved modest, but only temporary, success in countering the fundamentalist coalition. In 1990 and 1991 the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship emerged as a national reality of considerable size and vigor. On October 8-9, 1992, a conference, "The History of the Moderate Movement," was held at Mercer University. (Most of the presentations were published by Mercer University Press as *The Struggle for the Soul of the SBC: Moderate Responses to the Fundamentalist Movement*.)

The stage was now set. The CBF of Georgia was ready to make its debut.

— Robert G. Gardner, author  
*A Decade of Freedom and Faithfulness:  
The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Georgia,  
1992-2002*

**CBF of Georgia General Assembly, March 1-2, 2002**

Information inside...



## Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Georgia

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**VISIONS** is published eight times a year  
by CBF of Georgia

All questions and comments  
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## Frankly speaking



I have sympathy for the governor of California. He received several reports that his state was under threat from terrorists. The information was general in nature. He could not tell his people when or where an attack would occur. All he could do was say, "Be on alert."

It reminded me of the scripture where Jesus warned his disciples about what the fundamentalists of his day were going to do to them, "Blessed are you when men revile you, and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you foolishly, on account of me." (Matthew 5:11)

I received phone calls several weeks before Christmas from four different church leaders in Georgia. They all told me the same story. Someone had sent a 17-page letter to one of their deacons. Most of the material in the letter came from a layman from Missouri who has been accusing CBF of all sorts of things the last few years.

The arguments go something like this. There was a meeting of religious leaders. A representative of CBF was present. Another representative from a separate organization was present. This second person happens to be pro-choice. Therefore all CBF people must be pro-choice. Substitute pro-gay or pro-humanism in the sentence and you have other versions of the same argument. It is called guilt by association.

I could play the same game from another

direction. Did you know there was a religious meeting a few years ago that was funded by the Moonies and a national SBC leader was present? I guess that means all SBC leaders are pro-Moonie.

The trouble with this sort of stuff is that it is WRONG. It is not honest and it does not bring honor to the Christian community. Jesus warned us this would happen. He said that people would say all kinds of things about us. I guess I had expected it to happen, but I had not expected it to come from some in the Baptist family.

Like the governor of California, I feel a need to issue a warning. I cannot tell you when or where deceitful statements will surface next. Just be prepared. It is likely to come to your church soon. False accusations, false comparisons, half truths, outright lies. We need to stand up against this. We need to expose it for what it is, a form of religious intimidation.

If such material comes to your church, give me a call. We cannot stop unchristian behavior, but we can respond to those who bear such statements and create discontent within the family of faith. We are in the process of developing materials to help you counter these accusations with clarity. For Christ has promised that in our hour of trial he will give us the words we need to say.

—Frank Broome  
CBF of Georgia Coordinator

## memos from the missions coordinator



**W**elcome to the State of Poverty!  
If you aren't among the one million Georgians living below the poverty line, you don't know what it is like to feed and clothe a family under the grinding strain of poverty. As people of God who are on mission through CBF of Georgia, we need to acquaint ourselves with the conditions of poverty.

A simulation program called "Welcome to the State of Poverty" is planned as a breakout session at our General Assembly on Friday, March 1. During the simulated month, in four

# Ghana Grant Provides Help and Hope

**C**BF of Georgia did missions in Ghana this past summer. Through two separate grants from the missions committee, two teams of volunteer missionaries from Georgia lived among, worked alongside, worshipped with, and related to some of God's children in West Africa.

The mission work was part of a continuing partnership between Rev. Eddie Enim's Coast for Christ Baptist Ministries in the central coastal region of Ghana and Baptists from Georgia. Rev. Dan Hodges, retired director of missions from Milledgeville and former pastor of Peachtree Baptist Church in Atlanta and Perry FBC, began taking Baptists from Georgia to Ghana seven years ago.

The missionary work through Coast for Christ Baptist Ministries is unique and wonderful. It is unique in that it is an indigenous-led mission. Pastor Eddie and the other pastors and leaders from the churches in their association make all the decisions regarding the mission's vision, direction and work. They then ask their partners in ministry to come and help them accomplish the ministry.

It is also unique in its incredibly holistic approach to ministry. Through Coast for Christ Baptist Ministries, approximately 200 children are getting elementary education, scores of men and women are receiving vocational educa-



Left to right: Ashley Cobb, Alba VonDerLinden, and Andrea Jackson play and sing with Ghandian children during Bible school at Sankor Baptist Church

tion and job placement, healthcare is being offered to folks from six villages who have no other access to it, and new churches are being started in villages that have never had a Christian church of any kind.

Clean drinking water is being provided in remote areas via a series of cisterns and truck delivery. English (the official national language) is being taught to many who still only know tribal tongues, pastors and other church leaders are receiving formal theological training, and Christ is being proclaimed greatly in word and deed.

A group of 13 from Peachtree Baptist went to Ghana this past July. CBF of Georgia gave the group a grant that made it possible for four McAfee students and two Candler students from the congregation to experience the thrill of being used by God in missions.

Thank you to all who support CBF of Georgia. The mission dollars spent were well invested.

May God bless CBF of Georgia and the Coast for Christ Baptist Ministries of Ghana.

—Robert H. Walker, Jr., Senior Pastor  
Peachtree Baptist Church

*continued from previous page*

15 minute "weeks," the families must keep a roof over their heads, food on the table, maintain utilities, make loan payments, cover daily expenses like transportation, handle unexpected emergencies, and keep their children in school, all on less than \$13,650 a year for a family of three.

"The simulation is used to sensitize people to obstacles low income families face just trying to survive," says Ann Peisher, simulation facilitator and member of Georgia's Marginalized People Task Force, a mission objective of CBF of Georgia. The task force is one of several appointed by the Missions

Coordinator to research and recommend action by CBF of Georgia. The task force has developed a working definition of marginalized people which states: "Marginalized people are individuals or groups of people who are prevented by some obstacle(s) from maintaining an acceptable and holistic quality of life."

You are urged to participate in this unique opportunity to experience the state of poverty. This is most appropriate for pastors, mission committee members, WMU workers and others interested in mission opportunities meeting the

## Georgia Students Awarded CBF Scholarships

CBF of Georgia has awarded a total of \$2,230 to two students in the Baptist Studies Program at the Emory University Candler School of Theology. They are **Anne Vestal** of Atlanta and **Emily Richardson** of Savannah.

Vestal is a first year student at Candler, in pursuit of a Masters in Theological Studies. A 2001 graduate of Baylor University, she is fascinated with parallels in art history and religion. While at Candler, Anne will focus on church and art history.

Anne says, "I am excited about the next year and a half at Candler, to see how it will equip me to take the next step in my life. There are moments in life when God opens a door...I believe Candler was one of those doors for me."

Richardson, a graduate of the University of the South, plans to work in a social ministry which deals with homeless and/or abused children. While at Candler, her supervised ministry has taken place at the Atlanta Day Shelter for Women.

"I chose Candler because I wanted to go to an ecumenical school with diversity, and because of the school's reputation. It has been a real challenge academically and theologically."

We look forward to meeting the McAfee and Candler scholarship students at our state meetings in 2002.

## Baptist Women in Ministry of Georgia Seeking Nominations

Baptist Women in Ministry of Georgia is seeking nominations for their annual recognition of The Distinguished Church Woman of the Year. Please send entries to: Sara Withers, 200 Chardonay Oaks Drive, McDonough GA 30252. For more information call 770-914-2175. Please submit nominations by March 1, 2002.

## CBF of Georgia March Mission Madness 2002

**What?** A mission weekend for students in grades 7-12

**When?** March 22-24

**Where?** Rome First Baptist Church

**Info?** For a leader packet or more information contact Scott Ford, MMM 2002 Coordinator, at 770-439-9164 or [robertscottford@hotmail.com](mailto:robertscottford@hotmail.com).

## CBF of Georgia New Horizons Camp 2002

**What?** A mission camp for children who have completed grades 3-5

**When?** July 16-19 and July 23-26

**Where?** New Ebenezer Retreat Center in Rincon GA, just outside of Savannah

**Info?** Cost is \$125 per person which includes lodging, meals, t-shirt and camp supplies. A reservation of \$25 per

camper is required and taken on a first come/first serve basis. Reservations are accepted now through April 1, and all reservations must include a \$25 deposit. Send registration information and questions to: New Horizons Camp, Attn: Jana Kinnersley, Milledge Avenue Baptist Church, 1690 S. Milledge Ave., Athens, GA 30605; 706-354-0090, ext. 204; [janask@milledge.org](mailto:janask@milledge.org).

## Financial Picture

2001-2002 monthly budget requirement .....	\$34,050.16
November receipts .....	\$39,536.92
December receipts .....	\$38,580.63

## CBF of Georgia Sunday School Training and Church Growth Conference

**Saturday, February 2**

9:30 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.

**Macon First Baptist Church**

Cost \$15 per person, plus \$5 for lunch

Up to four conferences each for Preschool, Children, Youth, Adult workers, directors and pastors.

Register through  
CBF of Georgia 478-301-5926 or  
Center for Christian Education  
1-877-772-8291 (toll free)

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needs of people.

There are many opportunities of mission action for individuals and churches in Georgia. Many of these are time sensitive. Many needs are urgent and must be addressed immediately. Because our response time is critical, we must use immediate communication, such as the CBF of Georgia missions email list.

If you have access to email, it is easy to receive CBF of Georgia mission information. Simply send a message to

[CBFGAMissions-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:CBFGAMissions-subscribe@yahoogroups.com), give your name and email address, and you will be added to the list. You may also go to the website [www.cbfgamissions.org](http://www.cbfgamissions.org) to subscribe. You will find a large amount of information about resources and opportunities on this website.

— Jimmy B. Lewis, CBF of Georgia  
Missions Coordinator

Join us as we celebrate  
**A DECADE**  
*of Freedom and Faithfulness:*  
 THE COOPERATIVE BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP OF GEORGIA  
 1992-2002

**CBF of Georgia General Assembly, March 1-2**

Johns Creek Baptist Church, Alpharetta

7500 McGinnis Ferry Road • 770-623-8203 • www.jcbc.org

*Theme: Living with Purpose*

**FRIDAY, MARCH 1**

- 1:00 P.M. Registration
- 2:00 Breakout Session 1
- 3:15 Breakout Session 2
- 4:30 Dinner on Your Own
- 7:00 Worship with North Atlanta Young Singers, Will Willimon and John Weaver, Speakers

**SATURDAY, MARCH 2**

- 8:30 A.M. Business Breakout Session 3
- 11:00 Worship Will Willimon and Missionary Speaker

*Child care provided for both sessions.*

**BREAKOUT SESSION SAMPLER**

- Calling Out the Called
- The Interim Pastorate
- The Prayer of Jabez in Biblical Perspective
- What's Up at Baptist Heritage?
- The New Mission Vision of CBF
- Welcome to the State of Poverty
- Praying for Unevangelized People
- Preaching in Today's World
- The Creative Role of Music in Worship
- Keeping Quality in Kid's Church Music
- Growing a Church through the Sunday School



Will Willimon, Keynote Speaker



**HOTELS**

Hilton Garden Inn  
 Johns Creek  
 770-476-1966

Amerisuites  
 770-622-5858

Hilton Garden Inn  
 Windward  
 770-360-7766

Wellesley Inn & Suites  
 770-569-1730

Residence Inn  
 770-447-1714



Joan Godsey, Rachel Deems, Mary Sims and Rollin Armour

**2001 CBF of Georgia Fall Convocation Photo Memories**



Kim Hardegree, Wendy Wilson and Becky Brannon



Willis Duvall, Loyd Allen, Leona Duvall and Matt Duvall



Ken and Rachel Deems with Janie Peacock



Ruth Lee, Truett Gannon, Margaret Gannon, Kerri Kroeker, Matt Duvall, and Rachel Gunter Shapard

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.

COOPERATIVE  
BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP

GEORGIA

P.O. Box 4343  
Macon GA 31208-4343



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# CBF GA coming up!

## 2002

### February 2

**CBF OF GEORGIA SUNDAY SCHOOL CONFERENCE**  
Macon First Baptist Church of Christ  
9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
Cost \$15, lunch \$5  
Please see inside for more information.

### February 5-16

**Mainstream Baptist Network National Convocation**  
A Firm Foundation of Freedom  
Charlotte NC  
Contact 915-659-4102, [cowboy@wcc.net](mailto:cowboy@wcc.net), or [www.mainstreembaptists.org](http://www.mainstreembaptists.org).

### February 19-20

**The Harry Vaughan Smith Lectures**  
Religious Life Center  
Mercer University, Macon  
February 19 at 10:50 a.m. and 7:30 p.m.  
February 20 at 10:00 a.m.  
James Forbes, speaker

### February 28-March 2

**CBF Children's Ministry Network**  
Chattanooga TN  
Contact Cathy Anderson at 828-252-4781  
or [canderson@fbca.net](mailto:canderson@fbca.net).

### 1-2

**CBF OF GEORGIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY**  
Johns Creek Baptist Church, Alpharetta  
Georgia's annual assembly with inspiring speakers and informational breakout sessions. William Willimon is keynote speaker. Details inside.

### March 4-6

**The William L. Self Preaching Lectures**  
McAfee School of Theology  
Timothy Owings, speaker

### March 22-24

**CBF OF GEORGIA**  
MARCH MISSION MADNESS 2002  
*for students in grades 7-12*  
First Baptist Church, Rome  
Contact Scott Ford, MMM 2002 Coordinator,  
at 770-439-9164 or [robertscottford@hotmail.com](mailto:robertscottford@hotmail.com).

### April 4-6

**Collegiate Ministers Retreat**  
Scarritt-Bennett Center, Nashville TN  
Contact Becky Matheny at 706-549-7069 or [bm1349@aol.com](mailto:bm1349@aol.com).

### April 18-17

**Leadership in Ministry**  
Calvin Center, Atlanta  
Continuing education workshops  
in Ministering to Congregations as Family Systems.

### March

Go to [www.leadershipinministry.com](http://www.leadershipinministry.com).

### April 26

**Baptist Women in Ministry of Georgia**  
Annual Spring Meeting  
Memorial Baptist Church, Savannah  
Worship, lunch, business and awards are featured.

### June 27-29

**CBF General Assembly**  
Fort Worth TX  
For rooms call Connections at 1-800-262-9974.

### July 16-19 and 23-26

**CBF OF GEORGIA NEW HORIZONS CAMP**  
*A mission camp for children*  
*who have completed grades 3-5*  
New Ebenezer Retreat Center, Rincon GA  
Please look inside for more information.

### November 10-11

**CBF OF GEORGIA FALL CONVOCATION**  
Marietta First Baptist Church  
Tony Campolo, speaker

# events, dates, times & places