

CBF/GA
GENERAL
ASSEMBLY
&
CO-PASTORING

2-5

Cordially Invited Renée Bennett

Schedule

Speaker

General Assembly Workshops

Housing

Directions

Pre-Registration

Network Gatherings

Devita Parnell

6-9

Co-Pastoring

Tony and Katrina Brooks

Jeffrey and Tonya Vickery

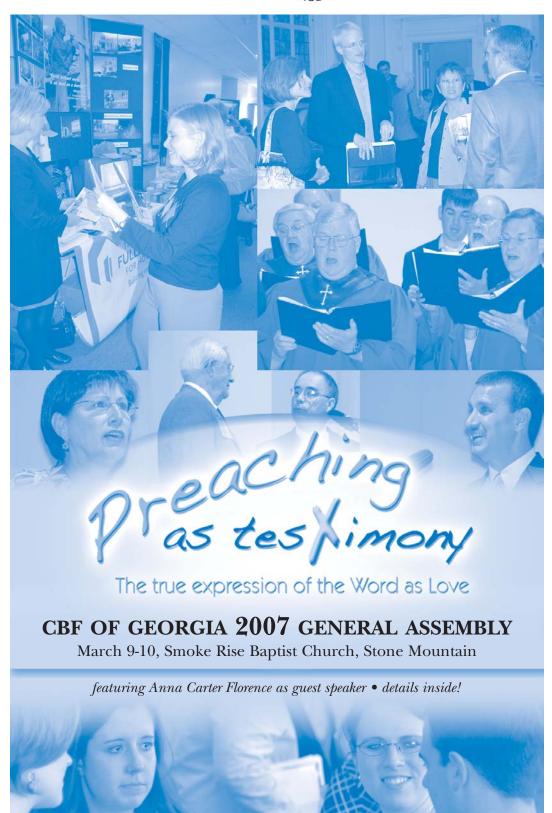
Mimi and Graham Walker

Bill Meyers

- 10 Frankly Speaking Opportunities/ Reports/Updates
- 11 CBF/GA Office of Reference & Referral
- 12 Coming Up!

COOPERATIVE BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP OF GEORGIA • FEB/MAR 2007

S ORGIA COOPER S





Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Georgia

P.O. Box 4343, Macon, GA 31208-4343 phone 478-742-1191 fax 478-742-6150 toll free phone 1-877-336-6426 toll free fax 1-877-336-6425

website www.cbfga.org

CBF/GA Staff

Coordinator

E. Frank Broome • fbroome@cbfga.org

Associate Coordinator for Congregational Life Devita B. Parnell • dparnell@cbfga.org

> Senior Assistant for Administration and Finance

Suzanne Powell • spowell@cbfga.org

Assistant for Communication and Resources Rachel B. Huston • rhuston@cbfga.org

Assistant to the Coordinator for Reference and Referral Alan Mitchell • amitchell@cbfga.org

Assistant to the Coordinator for Program Management Nancy A. Copeland • ncopeland@cbfga.org

CBF/GA Coordinating Council

Moderator • Renée Bennett, Macon Moderator-Elect • Darrell Watson, Forsyth Past-Moderator • Al Shauf, Cordele Treasurer • Kadar Jones, Macon Clerk • JoAnn Callaway, Moultrie

> Dan Ariail, Plains Brenda Dedmon, Roswell Jimmy Gentry, Carrollton Scott Key, Griffin Glenn Rasco, Jasper Jill Jenkins, Alpharetta Katrina Brooks, Rome Mimi Walker, Atlanta Ruth Cuellar, Newnan Tony Buesing, Dahlonega Jack Caldwell, Macon Nancy Church, Hiawassee Greg Deloach, Augusta Ginny Dempsey, Atlanta Cindy DuVall, Cordele Tom Hill, Canton Gerry Hutchinson, Atlanta Ron McClung, Haddock Stephanie McLeskey, Athens Deedra Rich, Alpharetta

Student Representatives

Michael Goodman, Candler School of Theology Carra Hughes, McAfee School of Theology

CBF/National Coordinating Council Georgia Members

Craig Williamson, Manchester Joanne Harwell, Dillard Gwen Colwell, Marietta Joanne Carr, Augusta Sara Powell, Hartwell Bill Ross, Athens Bill Self, Alpharetta

VISIONS is published six times a year by CBF/GA.

All questions and comments may be directed to Rachel Huston, 478-742-1191 ext 23 or rhuston@cbfga.org.

You Are Cordially Invited...

Renée Bennett, CBF/GA Moderator

don't know about you, but these words on an invitation indicate to me that something wonderful is about to happen and I AM INCLUDED! That's absolutely true for the Spring General Assembly for CBF/GA at Smoke Rise Baptist Church, Stone Mountain, March 9-10. You don't even have to RSVP (except with your hotel); YOU ARE INCLUDED!

And, here are several reasons why YOU WILL WANT TO BE THERE!

- 1. Fellowship with your Georgia CBF friends and family.
- 2. The best worship experiences with Anna Carter Florence leading.
- 3. Training opportunities regarding leadership, ministry, congregational life, missions, collegiate ministries, and much more!
- 4. Reports from our capable CBF/GA staff.
- 5. Yummy food!
- 6. More Fellowship with your Georgia CBF friends and family.
- 7. You fill in the blank with your own expectation.

I hope to see you there. I can hardly wait!



KEYNOTE SPEAKER Anna Carter Florence is the Associate Professor of Preaching and Worship at Columbia Theological Seminary. Anna is interested in historical, theological, aesthetic, and performative dimensions of preaching and the ways preaching engages other fields and different traditions. Her research focuses on testimony, feminist theology, the role of experience in preaching, and the history of preaching women. She is also the author of several books including Preaching as Testimony.

MUSIC CBF/GA Choir

DETAILED SCHEDULE

Friday, March 9

10:00 AM Coordinating Council Meeting

12:00 PM Registration/Resource Fair

1:00 Workshops Set 1

2:00 Break

2:15 Workshops Set 2

3:15 Break/Resource Fair

4:00 Workshops Set 3

5:00 Dinner

6:00 Business Meeting

6:45 Break

7:00 Worship

8:30 Dessert Reception Resource Fair and **Book Signing**

Saturday, March 10

8:00 AM Registration

8:30 Network Gatherings

10:00 Break/Snacks/Resource Fair

11:00 Worship

12:30 PM Adjourn

Register Now for this annual CBF/GA experience!

www.cbfga.org

Workshops

CBF/GA 2007 General Assembly

"BAPTISTS AND MUSLIMS: FINDING COMMON GROUND"

Learn some characteristics of the Islamic faith that will move you to the point of recognizing the commonalities between Islamic and Baptist beliefs. What should and should not be understood by dialogue among members of different religions. How should we perceive our similarities and differences? Why is dialogue so necessary and what are the challenges? There will also be time for other questions and comments.

Leaders: Maryam M. Ozer and Rumeysa Aydogmus

"CBF/GA UPDATE"

This workshop will focus on responding to questions from the membership about CBF/GA. Attendees will also have the opportunity to dialogue with the coordinator.

Leader: Frank Broome

"CBF WORK IN CHINA"

There are many myths surrounding Christianity in China today. Hear from our first-hand experience of the explosive growth of the Chinese Christian Church and how CBF is working with Christians in China. Also, learn how your church can join the movement of God's spirit in China.

Leaders: Renée Bennett and Becky Matheny

"COLLEGIATE MINISTRY"

Is your church currently ministering to college students? OR are you interested in ministering to college students? Come and hear an update about the Cooperative Student Fellowship (CSF) at Mercer University. This workshop will also focus on sharing ideas and resources regarding Collegiate Ministry in the local church. Leaders: Jason Loscuito and Neil Heath

"GETTING OUR SECOND WIND"

Park Avenue Baptist Church: The story of God giving one small urban congregation a new life, fresh vision, and ministry growth by thinking creatively about church, tradition, use of building space, and involvement in the community. Also, this session will contain an open dialogue of ideas and strategies about church "restarting" for pastors, church leaders, and members of churches that may be at any stage of the turnaround process.

Leader: Tony Lankford

"HOW THE LOCAL CHURCH CAN MINISTER TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES"

This workshop features a variety of ways a church can minister to people with disabilities and their families including providing respite care, Sunday School classes, Vacation Bible School, support for group homes, and worship opportunities. Many resources are shared, along with a discussion of disability etiquette and an overview of Developmental Disabilities Ministries.

Leaders: Cathy Humphrey and Bill Neal

"INTRODUCTION TO SPIRITUAL FORMATION"

What is spiritual formation? How is it different from Christian education? What resources are available for personal and corporate spiritual formation? These and many other questions will be answered as we explore the concept/ministry of spiritual formation and its practical application for individuals and churches.

Leader: Rick Bennett

"IS YOUR RESUME OLD SCHOOL?"

So, you realize you need to keep that resume brushed off and updated. If and when you need it, you want it to get the notice it deserves. How can you get your vita to stand out from the rest? You don't want it to be so "old school" the committee members yawn every time they pick it up. You don't want it to sink like the Titanic to the bottom of the resume stack. In this workshop you will be able to hear thoughts and ideas from Reference & Referral, people from other states, and from the national level. You will receive the benefit of their wisdom and experience so your resume will be all it can be.

Leader: Alan Mitchell

"KLESIS: GOD'S CALL AND THE JOURNEY OF FAITH"

Based on the belief that every follower of Christ has a calling and a ministry that expresses a faithful stewardship of his or her particular gifts, KLESIS is a process of reflection – connecting with biblical profiles and clarifying personal gifts – and of commitment to a creative and redemptive partnership with God and with each other to be the presence of Christ in our own places in the world. Learn more about this resource and how

you can use it in your church or individually. Leaders: Kathy Dobbins, Doris Nelms, and Colin Harris

"MAKING ROOM FOR THE SACRED IN FAMILY LIFE"

Family life is a blur! How do I make time for soccer, carpool, homework, AND help give form to my children's faith?! This conference will help parents of preschoolers and children explore how to transform ordinary family routines into opportunities to encounter the sacred.

Leader: Rick Bennett

"NURTURING THE CALLED: ON BEING A TEACHING CONGREGATION"

Every church bears the responsibility of inviting earnest and gifted Christians to consider how God will use their vocation. For some, that vocation will be inside the church as a congregational minister. This workshop will explore the ways in which churches may nurture the call to ministry, help qualify the called, and connect churches with gifted ministers. Together we will examine an emerging network of teaching congregations in Cooperative Baptist life and ways in which two Cooperative Baptist Churches in Georgia have transformed their mission to that of teaching congregations.

Leader: Jake Hall

"POSTMODERNITY: A PRIMER WITH CONTINUAL REFERENCE TO THE LIFE AND WORK OF THE CHURCH"

The aim of this session is to provide church leaders with a general overview of the salient theological and philosophical implications of the postmodern shift in culture for the life and work of the Church. This workshop will be largely expository, seeking to give church leaders a broad understanding of postmodernity along with its ecclesial implications. This is not a how-to lesson, but rather, a so-what session.

Leader: Jake Myers

"PUTTING EMERGENT THEOLOGY ON TAP IN YOUR COMMUNITY"

The aim of the session is to provide CBF/GA church leaders with a better understanding of the Emergent/Missional Church movement. The session will focus on theological, ecclesiological, and practical aspects of this burgeoning conversation as well as its prospects and implications for ministries within CBF/GA life.

Leader: Jake Myers

(Continues to page 5)

2007 CBF/GA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Clergy Networks

- Chaplaincy Network
- Children's Ministry Network
- Educator's Network
- Music Ministry Network
- Pastors' Network
- Student Ministry Network

Laity Network

(Emphasis on developing 12 GA areas. Discussion of issues of importance in your area.)

Network Gatherings

SATURDAY, MARCH 10, 8:30-10:00 AM



"When I came to my place of service in Georgia I immediately wanted to connect with fellow educators in Georgia CBF life. I have found those connections through participation in the clergy network for educators as we meet during each Fall Convocation and Spring General Assembly. encourage all educators (ministers of education or adult education) to participate in the next network meeting on March 10 at Smoke Rise Baptist Church. Frank Granger of FBC Athens will present a synopsis of research done by his McAfee students on educational ministries in eighteen of our Georgia CBF churches. We will then have opportunity to respond to highlighted concerns and begin to develop strategies for answering these concerns."

- Brian McCartney, Minister of Education, FBC Griffin

"I have learned quickly in my first couple of years of full-time ministry just how important staying connected with other ministers is for me. One of my best sources for that is the Children's Ministry Network. Not only does this group support me, encourage me, and keep me from remaining isolated, but I benefit from the creative ideas and practical tips from others who share the work of ministry in the area of children and families. I always look forward to our gatherings so that I can "check in" with these friends as well as learn about what is going on in their churches and min-

> - Julie Long, Minister of Children and Families, FBC of Christ, Macon

istries!"





ately, I've been doing a lot of thinking about the role of CBF and the role of the local church. In our new organizational paradigm, how are the two to relate to one another? Does the local church exist to support CBF or does CBF exist to support the local church? If I think on our mission statement — to serve Christians and churches as they discover and fulfill their God-given mission — then my answer is clear.

Our focus is on resourcing and equipping folks for service in the kingdom of God. We recognize that this mission is best achieved when we work together with partners to resource congregations. While our partners are many and our collaborative efforts are great, I still think we would be remiss if we overlooked what I feel is our greatest partner — the local church. So what does this mean that our ministry begins and ends with the local church?

One tangible expression of this ministry is the development of clergy networks throughout the state. Over the past several years, CBF/GA has worked to provide opportunities for clergy in similar positions to meet on a regular basis. These networks not only meet face-to-face but also virtually through e-communication. They operate under the premise that the best resources arise from the ground-up and not the topdown and that churches can resource one another. There is tremendous value and learning when one children's minister can learn from another children's minister. CBF/GA's role is to facilitate the process and then to step back and watch the creativity soar. On numerous occasions a church has called our office seeking answers. My first response is most always to point them to another church which has faced a similar situation. Churches truly are one of our greatest partners!

On Saturday, March 10, at our upcoming General Assembly, clergy will have the opportunity to join together for another face-to-face networking session. Our schedule has been adapted to allow for more time in these sessions. In many networks, specific topics for learning will be addressed, but in all networks, fellowship, encouragement, and ideaswapping will be a part of the informal agenda.

If you have not already found your place in a clergy network, I hope that you will take this opportunity to join in! And lest you think that you don't need a network, consider the fact that someone else might need your insight and wisdom!





...resourcing and equipping together!

WORKSHOPS (Continues from page 3.)

"RESPONDING TO CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM"

Learn how to effectively dialogue with fellow church members and others who are convinced that the government should mandate and enforce certain "Christian" moral and theological ideologies upon the American legal system, the public square, and the lives of individual citizens.

Leader: Bruce Gourley

"THE NEW FACE OF RETIREMENT: OPPORTUNITY FOR MISSIONS"

Boomers are looking for ways to make their retirement meaningful and productive. God's kingdom needs to harness the energy of these dedicated workers, but they will not fulfill denominational expectations from the old 20th Century. Discover how to prepare your members who are moving into their Third Age for missions in the 21st Century.

Leader: Jake Malone

"THE PEOPLE OF GOD AND THE PEOPLE OF DARFUR"

As people who have experienced the atrocities of war, the Holocaust, and other forms of intolerance, the Jewish community has taken the lead in rallying the nation to prevent a similar tragedy in the Darfur region of the Sudan. All of God's people have the ability and the mandate to stand up for the oppressed and for injustice. Come hear how a broad group of religious, human rights, campus, and civic organizations in Georgia are being educated on the genocide in the Darfur region of the Sudan and stimulated in coherent advocacy efforts on behalf of the people of Darfur.

Leader: Liliane Kshensky Baxter

"TRANSFORMING CONGREGATIONAL CULTURE"

This workshop will use Anthony Robinson's *Transforming Congregational Culture* to navigate the uncharted waters of our rapidly changing culture and the challenges to ministry this cultural shift presents to churches. It will spark a conversation about the internal changes required to breathe new lives into our congregations.

Leader: Jared Neal

Pre-Register Now!

Pre-registration is now available at www.cbfga.org!

Easy steps to pre-register for 2007 CBF/GA General Assembly:

- 1. Go to www.cbfga.org homepage.
- 2. Click on the 2007 General Assembly advertisement.
- 3. Click the registration form link.
- 4. Complete the form.
- Then click on the submit button at the bottom of the registration form to send.

NOTE: This is not for hotel reservations. See above for hotel contact information.

Housing

Best Western, 1595 East Park Place Blvd., Stone Mountain, GA 30087, 770-465-1022, CBF/GA room rate: 59.99* Deadline for reservations: Feb 16.

Comfort Inn, 5355 Stone Mountain Hwy., Stone Mountain, GA 30087, 770-465-1888, CBF/GA room rate: 59.99* Deadline for reservations: Feb 13.

Holiday Inn Express 1790 E. Park Place Blvd., Stone Mountain, GA 30087, 770-465-8847, CBF/GA room rate: 65.00* Deadline for reservations: Feb 8.

*Please call the number listed and do not book online. Mention CBF/GA to receive special rates.

Directions to Smoke Rise Baptist Church

From 1-28F

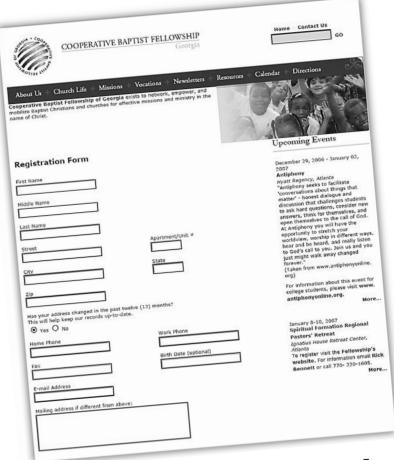
Take Hwy 78 East to Stone Mountain. Exit at Hugh Howell Road and go through the first traffic light. The church will be on your left.

From I-85 North

Exit at I-285 East. Take Hwy 78 East to Stone Mountain. Exit at Hugh Howell Road and go through the first traffic light. The church will be on your left.

From Tucker

From the intersection of Lawrenceville Hwy and Hugh Howell Road. Go east toward Stone Mountain for approximately 3 1/2 miles. The church will be on the right.



Co -

"I could never work with my spouse" or "cool." What vocation evokes such a response?

A Dream Come True

Tony and Katrina Brooks, Co-Pastors, North Broad Baptist Church, Rome

t never fails. We receive one of two responses when we tell people what we do: "I could never work with my spouse" or "cool." What vocation evokes such a response? We are Co-Pastors of North Broad Baptist Church in Rome, Georgia.

Nestled in the hills of Northwest Georgia, Rome is a city like no other...a bit rural, a bit suburban, and a bit urban. North Broad lies in the urban part of Rome. Established in 1867, North Broad lies in a changing community. Once a middle class neighborhood filled with beautiful homes the church is now surrounded by substandard housing, homes worn with age, and businesses that cater to transient, low income people. North Broad has a rich pastoral heritage which has helped her become an intentional, progressive, thinking community of faith. The church understands what it means to love neighborhood, and she seeks creative ways to be beacons of hope, conduits of love, and icons of grace.

Katrina

TONY AND I HAVE BEEN HER PASTORS since November 2003. Feeling called to assimilate this unique pastoral paradigm into her tradition, North Broad embraced us with open arms and servant hearts. Early on we faced several challenges. The first came when certain pastors in the Floyd County Baptist Association felt "called" to distance the association from our congregation by leading the association to affirm the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message as its confession of faith. Since that journey was very public, I won't repeat the details, but suffice it to say it wasn't easy. Often the membership would joke about being in the wilderness and feeling a kinship with the children of Israel before reaching the Promised Land.

Soon after severing our ties with our local association came another very public challenge, Shorter College. North Broad had been supportive in her history with several members serving as trustees over the year's, and several employees were church members. Interspersed between very public challenges were the normal challenges of Baptist churches: severing ties with the GBC and SBC, deaths, staff reconfiguration and hiring, budgets, outreach, etc. In essence, the church has faced many challenges. Perhaps it was the awareness of upcoming challenges that drew North Broad to us or maybe it was our

experience in challenges that prepared us for North Broad. All I know is that we needed each other and from day one we felt a part of this amazing church family.

When we began our journey, Tony and I had very specific duties. If you place our job descriptions together you have a traditional pastor job description. Our description deviates according to our gifts and talents. For example, since Tony was a senior pastor for nine years in Virginia before we arrived in Rome, he became the administrator. Since my gifts lay in missions, I oversaw the missions' arm of the church. Together we planned worship, led worship, and provided pastoral care including weddings and funerals. Initially we shared one job...and one paycheck.

In April 2004 the church increased our hours, our responsibilities, and our pay. With the added responsibilities came the opportunity for new duties. Tony oversees our youth ministry which includes working with the Youth Ministry Team and supervising our youth intern. I oversee our children's ministry which includes working with the Children's Ministry Team and supervising our children's intern.

Day to day we coordinate with one another. Sometimes I'll take on an administrative task, sometimes he'll lead out in a missions venture. Often our personalities will determine who leads out in an area, helps to restore broken community, or facilitates reconciliation. The congregation knows which one of us oversee(s) a church area/program. If a role has been changed for a year, we educate the congregation. If we alter the plan, we make sure the other is in the know in case there is a question. Sometimes our home, our two teenagers, or our extended families chart our day's adventure. Cell phones and e-mail help us to stay apprised of need and help us communicate.

I've heard church members say it is easy to forget we have two pastors except that we approach things differently, provide a different voice/perspective and accomplish many things. Very rarely do we duplicate or contradict each other. We present a united front unless we want the congregation to be exposed to differing opinions before they decide a plan of action.

Intentionally, we share an office. Our desks face each other with our computer screens back to back. Mingled throughout our book cases are photos, and other things denoting our personalities. Tony's side is littered with Auburn and Atlanta Braves memorabilia and my side is littered with keepsakes from my travels and Noah's Ark collectables. On my desk you'll find a canister filled with seasonal M&M's. On his desk you'll find an empty canister he fills with his favorites. Prominent on my desk are photos of our children. Prominent on his desk are books which changed his life. On the wall(s)

Pastoring

behind our desk(s) hang our diplomas and certificates. The remaining décor reflects our combined personality.

When we arrived at North Broad I would find myself lying back in my chair reveling in the glory of an actualized dream. I found it hard to believe the church was open to us serving together. I think it was a year before I felt confident they weren't going to say, "Sorry. The fun's over. We just want Tony." Part of that anxiety came from previous ministerial experiences, but that's a story for another day. As we move into our fourth year as co-pastors I have to admit I still really love my job. I am so very thankful that God has allowed us the privilege of serving together. We haven't gotten rich mind you, but our bills are paid, our children are thriving, and our church is growing. Our combined experience, theological education, and personalities equip us to serve this congregation that calls herself a family of faith offering to all the grace of God.

On Sunday while I was greeting folks I stopped to visit with one of our older couples. Somehow the topic of co-pastors came up. The wife commented on how she really enjoyed my preaching. It spoke to her as woman and resonated with her in places she hadn't felt before. The husband said he liked both our preaching and how we pastor together. It provided a complete picture of God and provided insight on many levels. He said he was sorry for other congregations who didn't have the

same benefit. He thought they were missing out.

Bottom line...co-pastoring is a dream come true. Everything I have ever done in my life, everything I have ever experienced...everything I have ever learned prepared me for this moment.

Tony

WHEN I FIRST HEARD of the co-pastor paradigm, I was a bit suspicious. There are so many reasons why this paradigm presents major challenges in the life of the church and the couple. It is not for the faint of heart! I wouldn't recommend it to everyone. In fact, there are some days when I wonder what I am doing! It is tough enough on a family when one spouse/parent serves a church as pastor, why would anyone want to serve as a co-pastor?

Let's begin with the challenges. First of all churches are accustomed to a leader in the church, not two leaders. There are some parishioners who cannot adjust to having two pastors. They want one person who will take on the role of pastor. They want one voice to lead them by words and action. What if the co-pastors have differing opinions?

Fortunately we serve in a church that doesn't see the pastor as the authority in the life of the church. This is a church where everyone has a voice! Yes, it would be easier to have someone dictate how the church should serve and be, but it isn't the Baptist way. We serve

a church which honors Baptist principles like soul autonomy, church autonomy, the priesthood of the believer, the authority of Scripture, and separation of church and state. In other words, we can disagree on an issue and the church will decide.

The second challenge is one of personality, temperament, and style. What if the co-pastors have differing personalities, temperaments, and styles of leadership? Katrina and I definitely differ in personality and temperament. We both believe in leadership by example and collaboration with church members. North Broad revels in our differing personalities. We have the ability to make everyone feel welcome. Some persons are more attracted to my personality. Others are more attracted to Katrina's personality.

The third challenge is communication. Being a co-pastor requires more work in communication. For an introvert, like me, it requires more energy than I sometimes feel that I have. There are times when we get our communications crossed. There are times when someone will tell me something, and I will assume that Katrina knows and vice versa. It is essential that we do a good job of communicating. Katrina and I build in times away from the office just to stay on track. If a couple has difficulty communicating, this model will not work.

The fourth challenge is finding time for self. As an introvert, I need time alone. I need time to recharge the batteries. It is mandatory for my emotional health. When you both work in the same office and have demands by others in the church, it is difficult to have solitary time unless you are intentional. For this reason, Katrina and I take different days off. The church loves it, because one of us is always there.

I also recommend a separate retreat or conference time. I get together with two of my peers from Virginia every year to work on sermon preparation and play golf. It is time for me just to be. I also am part of a monthly peer

The Brookes family, Katrina, their son and daughter, and Tony

(Continues to page 8)

EQUAL in Ministry and Complementary in Giftedness

Jeffrey and Tonya Vickery, Co-Pastors, Cullowhee Baptist Church in Cullowhee, NC

Editor's Note: The following article is reprinted with permission from the Center for Baptist Studies. It first appeared in the April 2006, Vol. 5 No. 4 issue of the Baptist Studies Bulletin.

n 1996 our moderate Baptist friends in the Carolinas were not optimistic. A local Baptist congregation calling a husband and wife to serve as pastor? They didn't think so. And sometimes we didn't either. The compromising yet genuine suggestion was that Jeffrey could find a church to pastor and Tonya could fit in. This option, however, asked one of us to ignore our calling to pastoral ministry. Though we are not stubborn to a fault, we were and are committed to God's calling.

Five years makes a difference. In 2001 we sought to transition from shared ministry as associate pastors in an ecumenical church to co-pastor a Baptist congregation. Those same moderate Baptists encouraged us that the possibility was open in ways it had not been before.

Today a growing network of Baptist co-pastors are serving churches in NC, FL, GA, VA, TN, and MO among other places. Some of these congregations are multi-staff churches in urban settings, and others are small rural churches. What they have in common is a married couple who serves as "pastor," equal in

ministry and complementary in giftedness.

Each co-pastor couple and congregation finds a model for ministry that works for their unique context. Some of us share one ministry position and thus one salary. Others are both "full-time" with two full salaries. Some co-pastors have designated ministry responsibilities: one focuses on administration and education, while the other looks after pastoral care and worship planning. Other co-pastors employ a more fluid model in their ministerial tasks—either pastor visits or counsels or leads when appropriate. In all cases, both pastors preach on a regular basis.

As moderate Baptists continue to educate women and men in our seminaries, and as we affirm openly our support of women in pastoral ministry, the role of co-pastors in congregations should proliferate. It models pastoral ministry for both women and men; it affirms the role of marriage and families in congregations; and it reflects the biblical example of Priscilla and Aquila. While co-pastoring is not for every church, nor for every married couple in ministry, more Baptist search committees need to be open to the possibility of co-pastors, and more couples called to ministry need to prayerfully explore this model of ministry.

We, therefore, humbly offer this advice: ... for Baptist Search Committees:

(1) Co-pastoring is a proven and effective model of pastoral ministry and can perhaps work in your church.

- (2) Creativity with salary and the division of ministry gives churches options rather than limitations with regard to calling co-pastors.
- (3) The pastoral calling must be issued equally to both pastors so that each individual will be seen as pastor to the congregation.
- (4) Your church may lose fellowship with other churches and groups not open to female clergy.
- (5) Ready to consider co-pastors? Couples serving as co-pastors have resources available to help churches in the search process. We can talk to search committees, or have church members share what it is like in a church with co-pastors.
- ... for Ministry Couples:
- (1) Co-pastoring is a proven and effective model of pastoral ministry. This works! And it can be done.
- (2) Know how your gifts for ministry are complementary and how they are unique, and be able to share these ideas with search committees.
- (3) Shared preaching is a must in establishing pastoral identity for both pastors.
- (4) Every marriage requires good communication. Sharing a pastorate requires the same.
- (5) Interested? Shoot us an email (*jandtvickery@msn.com*). We would love to help you explore the possibilities of serving and proclaiming together. CBF/GA

Co-pastoring is a proven and effective model of pastoral ministry.

DREAM COME TRUE (Continued from page 7.)

learning group through CBF. Couples who consider the copastor paradigm need time away from their spouses.

Finally there is the challenge of family time. Both of us are committed to being there for our teenagers. I coached both of my children when they were younger in baseball and soccer. Now, we are very active in their extracurricular activities in order to be there for them. The church has been very supportive and respectful of that time. Not every church would be as sensitive.

Though there are times when we are frustrated and wonder

if this paradigm is possible for a lifetime, we know that it is the best option for the church and us right now. North Broad Baptist Church has given us this wonderful opportunity to serve together. And we strongly believe that the co-pastor paradigm fulfills the biblical imagery of God and illustrates the potential in humanity as male and female work together to love God and neighbor.

Just think about the children in our church. We will have children who have seen both male and female lead worship, conduct weddings and funerals, and be there as their pastors. We don't know of a better, more holistic way to show God's love. CBF/GA

The Pastors Walker

Mimi and Graham Walker, Co-Pastors, Northwoods Baptist Church in Chamblee

"Seminary students at McAfee often ask questions about our experience of co-pastoring. 'What is it like to co-pastor with your husband? Is it easier or more difficult to co-pastor a church?' I usually answer jokingly, 'Co-pastoring is not for the timid or the newlywed,'" says Mimi Walker, who serves with her husband Graham at Northwoods Baptist Church in Chamblee, Georgia.

All joking aside, co-pastoring has been a good experience for both of the Walkers. One of the biggest advantages is the ease of communication. "You don't have to wait for the next meeting or wonder if this is a good time to call your associate to talk about a program or a problem. We can work on a ser-

mon or plan the agenda for a meeting while doing the dishes or over a cup of coffee at Borders," says Mimi. Graham observes that "while we come to our ministry with different strengths and limitations, we often find that the balance is

You can find more information on co-pastors at www.copastornet.com

best for the church family. I tend to be more of a task-oriented minister while Mimi is an excellent personal communicator. We need both emphases in our church ministry and I'm learning from Mimi to have a more balanced approach."

Graham is also a professor of theology for McAfee School of Theology and finds that the ongoing engagement with the local church setting greatly enhances his application of a traditionally abstract field of education. "When you are asked to share with a family that is grieving the loss of a loved one or speaking to a young adult about baptism and the meaning of faith, then your ability to communicate theological concepts takes on new skills. These are skills that a professor who teaches in a seminary needs to be reminded of as he or she helps seminary students find their place in the local church." The opportunity of co-pastor allows Graham the ongoing engagement of theory and practice.

Another advantage is being passionately involved with the



same goals and the same people. Mimi notes that "we have worked together in some form for most of our careers. As missionaries in the Philippines we both taught seminary and worked together in assisting local church leaders. Although we share in the same ministry we definitely have different strengths and skills. Our hope is that we complement one another in the work we do in the church."

One of the most challenging things the Walkers do is to write and preach a sermon together. It usually turns out to be a good sermon and a positive experience, but it is a difficult task to accomplish. Mimi explains, "We have very different writing styles and we often find different aspects of a scripture passage that we want to focus on in a sermon. It takes more effort to negotiate and come to a conclusion that we both can be happy with."

They have resolved the "Pastor's" parking spot issue with the rule: "Whoever gets there first gets the space." Yet, one difficulty remains for most co-pastors. What do you call these two? Probably the most inventive solution to the dilemma is that put forward by the McAfee seminary students at Northwoods Baptist Church where Graham and Mimi pastor. They call them "the Pastors Walker" or to their face "Pastors Walker" and they both turn around and answer "yes!" CBF/GA.

A Member's Perspective

Bill Meyers, Member of Northwoods Baptist Church

ABOUT A YEAR AGO Northwoods Baptist was in the middle of trying to find a pastor to fill a role that had been vacant for about a year already. We had been receiving resumes and talking to folks for some time but just weren't finding the person we thought that God had for us. Several members asked us if we had thought of a bivocational pastor or even co-pastors. The committee had considered this option a viable one but had not as of that

time received any candidates. Upon further consideration we thought that the co-pastor route would be rather advantageous.

But why co-pastors? Co-pastors would most likely be bivocational which could possibly mean divided focus. Would this be something we could accept? Can someone who has another job that is full-time be available for the church when she/he is needed? On the other hand, co-pastors also provide you a greater possibility that their schedules will accommodate the church.

What turned out to be the biggest concern was who would be the decision-maker for issues. After all, there needs to be a single point of authority, right? How can two different people provide that single vision to a larger group of folks?

After many discussions with Graham and Mimi Walker, though, the pastoral search committee decided that this issue would be minimized since we were looking at a couple. These folks had been married for over twenty years, had raised three children

(Continues to page 11.)

Opportunities/Reports/Updates

FRANKLY SPEAKING

Frank Broome, CBF/GA Coordinator

everal months ago we issued a call for local churches to send us the name(s) of individuals who would serve as representatives of their church(es) in our area network



meetings. To be honest the response has been a bit slow. As most of you know we have twelve area networks planned. You can see the area map on our web site <code>www.cbfga.org</code>. This map was developed a number of years ago and was based on recommendations made by our membership.

In 2007 we will have a series of meetings throughout the state based on this map. Some of the meetings will be at churches, some in homes, and some in restaurants where a meeting room is available. If you are interested in hosting such a meeting in your area, let me know.

At these meetings we will deal with a variety of issues that relate to the local congregation and to the larger CBF/GA family. Specific issues such as reference and referral, missions, and congregational life will be discussed. Area-wide events designed to strengthen local congregations and to promote fellowship between congregations will be of primary concern.

If you are interested in helping with this in your area contact me via email at *fbroome@cbfga.org*.

CBF/GA SCHOLARSHIPS

CBF/GA is accepting applications for:

- **Seminary Scholarships** (students enrolled in any Master's level degree program).
- Undergraduate Scholarships (rising seniors in college).

Completed applications must include a form, three references, and an essay.

To receive an application form, contact Devita Parnell at 478-742-1191, ext. 28, or *dparnell@cbfga.org* or visit *www.cbfga.org*. Application deadline for 2007-2008: April 1, 2007.

JAPANESE RED MAPLE LEAF

Some of our readers were interested in knowing more about the Japanese Red Maple leaf which was pictured on the cover of our last issue of *Visions*.



If you would like more information, please visit the UGA College of Agriculture

UGA College of Agriculture & Environmental Sciences website at http://www.caes.uga.edu/ and enter a search for the Japanese Red Maple tree (Glowing Embers variety).

FINANCIAL PICTURE

2006-2007 Year-to-Date
June 01-December 31, 2006

June 01-December 31, 2006	
Budget Requirement	\$407,416.33
Undesignated Receipts	\$314,397.25
Over/ <under></under>	\$<93,019.08>
Designated Receipts	\$35,222.09

BAPTIST WOMEN IN MINISTRY OF GEORGIA

Distinguished Churchwoman of the Year

Each year, Baptist Women in Ministry of Georgia honors women 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. The recipient of the Churchwoman of the Year Award will be honored during the Annual Spring Meeting of Baptist Women in Ministry of Georgia.

Visit www.cbfga.org and click on calendar for more details.

Please mail or email all nominations to:

Karen Pennings 3130 Brookwood Dr., Apt B Macon, GA 31204

kap1003@yahoo.com

Sara Owen Etheridge Scholarship Award

Each year Georgia Baptist Women in Ministry awards \$500 to a Baptist woman who is currently studying at the Master's or Doctoral level. To receive the scholarship the student must be a current or past resident of Georgia and have completed at least 30 hours in a theological-studies program. Applicants may attend a Baptist or non-Baptist institution. The deadline for applications is March 15, 2007. The scholarship will be awarded at the Annual Spring Meeting of Baptist Women in Ministry of Georgia.

For more information or to receive an application, please contact Karen Pennings at 478-714-0380 or <code>kap1003@yahoo.com</code>. To download the application, visit <code>www.cbfga.org</code> and click on calendar.

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.

A MEMBER'S PERSPECTIVE (Continued from page 9.)

requiring that they present a unified face to their kids, and had spent time in a co-pastor situation previously. In other words, they had made it work before so they should be able to make it work again.

We thought that the best approach, then, would be to have defined roles for each person. We opted to assign Graham the role of Preacher/Teacher and Mimi the role of Administrator/Pastoral Care. This seemed to be aligned along their strengths and made the most sense to us. Of course, there is an understanding that those lines may blur from time to time because of other responsibilities. You can't really expect them to be strict about these roles and not ever become involved in the activities

of the other role. So this really means we have two individuals doing very similar things, usually in conjunction with each other.

The Walkers quickly became a beloved part of our community. Graham had already been with us for about a year as our interim pastor. We had already fallen in love with him and felt truly blessed to have such a brilliant and well-respected theologian in our midst. Mimi joined us next and quickly fell right into the midst of the group with a truly caring spirit. You might have thought that it would be awkward to come in after her husband had already established close relationships with members of the congregation. If this was true, Mimi never let on that

this was the case.

The transition for the church from a single pastor to co-pastors has been fairly smooth because of the genuineness and caring that they demonstrate. They work as a team in all aspects of the ministry, keeping that all important unified vision for the staff and congregation. I think that most, if not all, of the members of the community have grown to love them both individually and as a team. There may be times when there are some philosophical differences, but the relationships have been built where we can discuss them openly and honestly. Overall, the experience has been one that everyone has been able to take some joy and learning from. CBF/GA.

A Baptist-Jewish Dinner & Dialogue

Co-sponsored by CBF/GA and the Atlanta Chapter of the American Jewish Committee

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

6:00 PM Registration

6:30 PM Dinner

Temple Emanuel

1580 Spalding Drive

Dunwoody, GA 30350

With presentations by Barbara Rosenblit and Loyd Allen.

Cost: \$10

To register, contact Devita Parnell at dparnell@cbfga.org or 478-742-1191, ext. 28 by Friday, February 9.

"Growing Generous Churches, Growing Generous Christians"

A free, one day, ecumenical conference featuring Lynn Miller, Stewardship Theologian.

Co-Sponsored by

The Center for Baptist Studies, Mercer University, Congregational Life, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship CBF Foundation

Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Georgia

Religious Life Center, Mercer University, Macon, GA

April 16, 2007

The Conference is FREE!

Visit www.centerforbaptiststudies.org and click on Conferences and Seminars to register now.

Designed especially for ministers and local church stewardship committee members, but all are welcome.

CBF/GA OFFICE OF REFERENCE AND REFERRAL

Alan Mitchell, Assistant to the Coordinator for Reference and Referral



DID YOU KNOW ...

that we can advertise church position openings on our website?

To advertise your church position opening, fill out the church seeking minister form, which can be found at www.cbfga.org. Place the cursor on top of the word "Vocations." A drop down menu will appear, offering you more options. Place the cursor on the "church seeking minister" line and click. When you do this the church seeking minister form will appear. Complete the church seeking minister form and hit submit. Then send an email to amitchell@cbfga.org requesting that your position opening be added to our website.

Coming Up!

Feb. 2-3

NOW SERVING 2007

McAfee School of Theology, Mercer University, Atlanta A collegiate missions event cosponsored by McAfee School of Theology and CBF/GA. Contact Devita Parnell at dparnell@cbfga.org.

Feb. 7-10

CURRENT RETREAT "LET JUSTICE ROLL"

First Baptist Church of Austin, TX

Registration cost is \$110 for ministers and lay leaders, \$55 for seminary students. For more information, visit https://www.thefellowship.info/current/current.icm.

Feb. 13

A BAPTIST-JEWISH DINNER & DIALOGUE

Temple Emanuel, Atlanta

Co-sponsored by CBF/GA and the Atlanta Chapter of the American Jewish Committee. 6:00 PM Registration, 6:30 PM. Dinner, Cost: \$10. With presentations by Barbara Rosenblit and Loyd Allen. To register, contact Devita Parnell at dparnell@cbfga.org or 478-742-1191, ext. 28 by Friday, February 9.

Feb. 19-20

WILLIAM L. SELF PREACHING LECTURES

McAfee School of Theology, Atlanta

Speaker: Tom Long. For information, email frazier_d@mercer.edu.

March 9-10

CBF/GA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Smoke Rise Baptist Church, Stone Mountain Speaker: Anna Carter Florence, Assistant Professor of Preaching and Worship, Columbia Theological Seminary

March 15

DEADLINES: BAPTIST WOMEN IN MINISTRY OF GEORGIA AWARDS

Distinguished Churchwoman of the Year Award Visit www.cbfga.org and click on calendar for more details.

Sara Owen Etheridge Scholarship Award Scholarship will be awarded at the BWIM of Georgia Spring Meeting. For more information or to receive an application please call Karen Pennings at 478-714-0380 or email kap1003@yahoo.com.

March 16-18

MARCH MISSION MADNESS 2007

FBC Eatonton

A missions weekend for youth. Participants will stay at Rock Eagle Retreat Center. Contact Scott Ford at robertscottford@mac.com.

March 19-20

URBAN MISSION WORKSHOP

McAfee School of Theology, Atlanta

Workshop Leader: Ray Bakke. For more information, email frazier_d@mercer.edu.

March 23-25

MARCH MISSION MADNESS 2007

FBC Columbus

A missions weekend for youth. Contact Scott Ford at robertscottford@mac.com.

April 1

CBF/GA SCHOLARSHIP DEADLINE

To receive an application form, contact Devita Parnell at 478-742-1191, ext. 28, or *dparnell@cbfga.org* or visit www.cbfga.org.

April 16

"GROWING GENEROUS CHURCHES, GROWING GENEROUS CHRISTIANS"

Religious Life Center, Mercer University, Macon A free one day ecumenical conference featuring Lynn Miller, Stewardship Theologian. Co-Sponsored by The Center for Baptist Studies, Mercer University, Congregational Life, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, CBF Foundation, and Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Georgia

June 27-29

CBF NATIONAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Washington, D.C.

Nov. 4-5

CBF/GA FALL CONVOCATION

FBC Savannah

COOPERATIVE BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP



P.O. Box 4343 Macon GA 31208-4343



NON-PROFIT U.S. POSTAGE PAID ATHENS GA PERMIT #351

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED