

# VISIONS



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## The Many Faces of CBF/GA

Devita Pamell,  
Associate Coordinator  
for Congregational Life

I must confess. I pay attention to numbers. Let's face it, numbers mean something. Yes, they can mean that we've given people what they want or that we've discovered snazzy marketing techniques or big names that can draw a crowd. However, for me, numbers mean much more than that. They mean involvement, investment, buy in, connection, and real (as opposed to perceived) needs being met.

I must confess. I pay attention to numbers. So, when attendance at our most recent General Assembly was lower than usual, I immediately jumped to the conclusion that CBF must be losing its connection to churches and individuals, especially "the young people."

In my quest to make sense of the numbers, I have come to the conclusion that there are many faces of CBF of Georgia.

For some it looks like General Assembly or Fall Convocation. But for others, especially the "young people," it looks like *Current*, March Mission Madness, Now Serving, or the Youth Choir Festival. For some, it's the face of field personnel serving unreached



people groups around the world or the hands of generous individuals providing for their seminary training or the hearts of hospitable Christians building bridges of understanding and openness with other faith groups.

As you thumb through the pages of this issue of *Visions*, may you discover, as I have, that while CBF of Georgia has many different faces, its purpose remains the same: to find meaningful ways to support churches and individuals as they fulfill their God-given mission. May we continue to be faithful in expressing and interpreting our identity as Baptists and Christians for every generation! CBF/GA

## CBF/GA 2007 FALL CONVOCATION ... plus a weekend away from home in historic Savannah, GA!



Enjoy Savannah sites like River Street, Historic Squares, Museums, Fort Pulaski, and Tybee Island. Dine on the best seafood around.

**November 4-5, FBC Savannah**

Theme: Standing Up on the Inside ... Speaker: Charles Bugg,  
Professor of Church Ministry and Leadership at M. Christopher  
White School of Divinity, Gardner-Webb University

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## IN THE NEWS: March Mission Madness

*Editor's Note: This year March Mission Madness was held in Eatonton and Columbus; the two weekends had 674 total combined participants. The following article is about the Eatonton MMM. The article below consists of excerpts taken from the Morgan County Citizen, in an article titled Think Locally. Act Neighborly. which was published March 29, 2007, and written by Angelina Bellebuono.*

March Madness has taken on a more humanitarian edge than a college basketball tournament. March Mission Madness, an annual youth mission effort, drew over 450 youth from churches across the state. The youth reached out to help neighbors in need.

Here is one of their stories:

Barbara Baines is 70. "I had a birthday first week in February," she says. She sits in her small kitchen, heated only by an old electric heater, inside her home. "This was my mama's house," she says, "and I raised my children up here, too."

Last year, a reckless driver took down a power line pole across the street. When Baines returned home that night, she discovered that the electrical line

Photo Courtesy of the *Morgan County Citizen*.



had jerked the connection meter to the house, and completely pulled off the side of her house.

She moved in with relatives, took out a loan at the bank and waited for two months for the repairs to be made to her home.

On this particular Saturday in March, Baines is rejoicing in sounds of scraping and raking and laughter outside her window. Twenty-four members of Baptist youth groups from around the state are working to paint her house and clean up her yard in a single day. It's March Mission Madness, and Baines says she sees the Lord in this work. *CBF/GA*

Barbara Baines watches in amazement as Baptist youth paint her house and clean her yard in a single day! (See MMM photos and Now Serving photos on page 1.)

# Georgia Youth Choir Festival

Catherine McKay, 9th grade,  
First Baptist Church, Gainesville

When most people first think of a festival, visions of food, fun, and laughter come to mind. The Georgia Youth Choir Festival fits right in, but it adds one more vision: singing.

For the festival, church youth choirs around Georgia joined together to sing songs they had learned at their own church. Not only did I enjoy learning new songs, but I also enjoyed listening to the words and praising God, which was the real reason for the weekend.

S'mores anyone? One night we made a bonfire, which was a huge success. Everyone had a blast hanging out with people from other churches and learning more about each other. We made bonds that will last a lifetime.

Sunday, after our songs were perfected, we worshipped with a retirement home. We were given an opportunity to speak with the residents, who had uplifting words to say as we hugged and held their hands. God's joy was apparent on faces, as well as hearts.



Catherine McKay greets retirement home residents with a smile and a warm hand shake.

Our final concert was Sunday evening and our parents were welcome to attend. Knowing it would be our last time singing together, we gave the songs our very best. I was moved by God's presence as our voices proclaimed His glory and rang throughout the church.

It was hard to leave new friends, but we left with a wonderful experience — knowing we had made an impact on other people's hearts, as well as our own. I encourage this to continue to be an annual festival, and urge more churches to participate next year! I hope to see you there! CBF/GA



John Williamson

## Cooperative Student Fellowship

John Williamson, Sophomore at Mercer University

I AM HONORED and privileged to be a participant and leader in the Cooperative Student Fellowship of Mercer University. Our program began just this past school year and has started off as a small group, but our members are adamant about serving Christ through service projects and are eager to learn about why we are Baptists and the freedom that our denomination entails. Most importantly, we take joy in applying our service and knowledge by loving people as we believe Christ loves us.

*Continues to page 10.*

## Now Serving

Sean Johnson, Participant,  
First Baptist Church, Athens

I headed off to college with big hopes and plans. I wanted to do well in school, meet new friends, have fun, but also get involved. My goal for my first year of college was to find a local church that 1) I could get involved in and feel at home, and 2) I could get plugged into and serve. I visited several of the numerous Baptist churches in Athens and found my home at First Baptist Athens. I felt that God was leading me to become involved in and serve through this church. Finding ways to serve didn't take long.

Since I began attending First Baptist I have been involved in many of the programs and ministries they have to offer. I have led a middle school Bible study, led and helped lead worship on both Wednesday nights and Sunday mornings, and taught small groups for Disciple Now weekends. These things have provided me with a chance to use the gifts that God has given me and the experiences that I have to serve Athens and the members of First Baptist.

Becoming involved in and becoming a member of First Baptist not only allowed me the opportunity to serve in the church, but it also provided me with opportunities to serve in other places. One of these opportunities is *Now*

*Serving* fields a wide variety of mission opportunities.



Sean Johnson (right) shares a break with *Now Serving* friends.

*Serving. Now Serving* is a mission opportunity in Atlanta for college students from all over the Southeast. Students come from UGA, Clemson, Auburn, Mercer, and several other schools. These students spend an entire Saturday pouring out love over the city of Atlanta. This is done through yard work, cleaning, Bible camps, painting, and just about anything else you could imagine. I have attended *Now Serving* the past two years and absolutely love it! It's such an awesome experience to be able to join together with students from different schools and work towards a common goal — spreading the love of Christ with our hard work. It's amazing how a group of people who have never met before can build bonds so quickly and work together (despite being fans of rival football teams). I was also privileged enough to be able to go on First Baptist's college mission trip to New Orleans this past spring break. We were able to work with Habitat for Humanity building bunk beds that would enable more volunteers to come and help serve the city. It was unbelievable to see how much work still needs to be done in New Orleans. There are thousands of people who are still displaced from their homes. I felt guilty for waiting so long to go and do what I could to help.

Mission Opportunities are all around us. It is just a matter of getting plugged in and finding a place to serve. God calls us to go out and use what we have to make a difference. I feel blessed to have found such a great church with so many opportunities to help me answer this call.

CBF/GA

Mission opportunities are all around.  
It is just a matter of getting plugged  
in and finding a place to serve.

# Antiphony

Kate Perry, Student  
at McAfee School  
of Theology



WHEN I WAS A CHILD, I would frequently approach my parents and ask them what I know today to be the tough questions. Why is the sky blue? What makes the wind blow? Where do babies come from? To all of these questions, and a host of others, their answer always was, “I’ll tell you when you’re older.” I have found that my parents were not the only ones who dodged the difficult questions. It is no secret that placing the daunting on the back burner is a much easier solution than searching and struggling for an answer. In our world today we are faced with many arduous situations both domestic and abroad. Often times I find myself leaning toward “I’ll find out when I’m

older” rather than “Let me seek out the answer now, so that I may affect a change.” For so long there had been no forum in which young Christian leaders could wade through the murky waters; then came Antiphony.

Antiphony: conversations about things that matter. Antiphony is a place for young Christian leaders to come and have intentional dialogue with other young Christian leaders (and some veterans of the ministry) about how to minister in their current cultural context. The sessions at Antiphony do not skirt around the complicated issues. Young leaders meet together in worship, attend sessions, and break out into smaller “family” groups to debrief what they have encountered throughout the day. The sessions are led by a variety of people from pastors to musicians to environmentalists, etc.

There is an intentionality about Antiphony. A space is created where young Christian leaders feel safe to discuss their responsibility to social justice, environmental, and human rights concerns. I was relieved in finding that not every young leader in attendance at Antiphony was preparing for a life of vocational ministry. Many were seeking conversation to find their role as future Christian doctors, lawyers, politicians, psychiatrists, and musicians, to name a few.

The conversations did not end when I left Antiphony. I was encouraged by what I participated in there to start conversations about things that matter in my own circles. I was challenged to not settle for “I’ll tell you when you’re older,” but rather to link up with other leaders and make strides toward understanding and changing the status quo. CBF/GA

## From Seminary Bubble to Congregational Arms

Nikki Hardeman, Pastoral Resident, First Baptist Church, Rome

Moving from the seminary classroom to congregational ministry is a little, I imagine, like going from the womb into the arms of your mother after you are born. You may continue to feel completely loved and adored by your mother, but life doesn’t feel quite as cozy and safe as it did in the womb. Seminary was a safe time of growing and learning. The transition to actual congregational ministry required that I leave behind the safety of my seminary experience and venture into what felt like very uncharted territory. This time of transition was in no way a negative experience for me. However, the nature of transition is



that it can be quite challenging.

The transition from the classroom to congregational ministry was challenging for me on many levels. One of the biggest challenges for me was learning how to prioritize my job. In seminary, I was given a syllabus that was filled with objective assignments and their due dates. When you work in a church, you are given a job description and are told to “go for it.” I remember sitting at my desk the first day of work, twiddling my thumbs, wondering where I was supposed to begin.

Another challenge I faced was learning how to use the knowledge I gained in seminary in a way that mattered to the people in my congregation. How do you make Thomas Helwys or Martin Luther

matter in the every day lives of people? What does your Greek class really have to do with anything in the lives of people who are struggling just to make it from day to day? I learned quickly that sometimes none of that matters; and then there are times when it does matter, it’s all in the way that it is presented and translated.

Then there are those things that seminary can never teach you. How do you run a commercial dishwasher? How do you balance your personal life and your work life? How do you recruit volunteers? What do you do when you see more in a hospital room than you expect? How do you really go about helping people as they venture through the

*Continues to page 9.*

# Leadership Is Service

Ryan Clark, Director of Admissions,  
McAfee School of Theology

We get a large number of phone calls in the admissions office from people of all ages asking about seminary. They ask about the different programs, what classes are like, what our students do after graduation. Many times, what prospective students are attempting to sort out is whether their sense of service and desire to support the church is really a call to vocational ministry.

As we sift through admission applications, a few recurring themes always surface in admission essays. One, the young leaders had a transformational experience during hands-on mission, usually in a community different from their own. Two, someone in a leadership position initiated a conversation about their leadership role in the church. Three, they felt a sense of being pulled toward the work of the community of faith, or what we might recognize as a “calling.”



It might have been a sense of constant urgency among student ministers to keep their students busy over the summer, or maybe it was a communication boon which allows sharing of images reflecting the physical needs of people; but whatever the case, young leaders have found themselves inextricably linked with service to others.

It is not just younger church-going folks, it has become *tres chic* in corporate America to be viewed as supporting volunteerism and programs that “give back” as is seen on this season of *American Idol*. This popular trend is highlighted by the success of shows like ABC’s *Extreme Home Makeover*. Now, I’m pretty cynical about corporate America jumping on the mission bandwagon; however, I believe the ability to sell Kenmore appliances while building someone a new house at no cost to the family highlights something which has become a recognizable, national definition of leadership and what it means for up-and-coming consumers to be leaders.

Leaders are those who serve others while seeking justice for their community and their world. As Christians, we’re not surprised by this definition. As followers of Christ’s life and teachings, we have the Ultimate example. We all know without fanfare or glitz, student ministers and pastors along with the support of local women’s missionary groups have been modeling servant leadership for many years.

*Continues to next page.*

## Nurture Leadership in Your Young Church Members

If you are curious about how your church can nurture leadership among her younger members, consider a few of the following:

- Engage in service projects outside your community with the purpose of learning about other cultures, restoring justice, and embodying the Good News.
- Engage in regular service projects inside your community with the purpose of validating the gospel message your congregation preaches.
- Include young members in meaningful ways in the decision-making processes of your church.
- Develop methods of communication which are technologically relevant. Young adults are communication addicts. Use a story-telling method (narrative) to report on what’s been going on and opportunities in the future.
- Engage younger members in relationship-building activities. Young adults look for sincerity in leadership. This is almost always judged by the quality of relationship with other leaders and the young person’s overall sense of connectedness to the community.

Get connected this summer with CBF Young Leaders in a breakout session at General Assembly in Washington, D.C., on the topic of Changing Leadership.

*Current* is also sponsoring 11 on 11: Simultaneous Mission Projects where hundreds of volunteers all over the U.S. will be on mission through projects in their communities, Saturday, September 15, 2007.

If you are a leader looking to become more connected with each other in CBF life, go to <http://www.thefellowship.info/current/current.icm>.

For Georgians, plan to connect with one another in Washington, D.C., on June 28 in the Constitution Ball Room of the Grand Hyatt at 3:45 p.m.

Also join one of the many networks for Children’s Ministers, Student Ministers, Music Ministers, Education Ministers, Pastors, and Chaplains at each of the CBF/GA annual meetings.

# SUMMER INTERNSHIP = Hands-on Learning

Brenda Dedmon, Minister to Children, First Baptist Church, Roswell

THE CHILDREN'S SUMMER intern at First Baptist Church of Roswell is designed to give first-hand experiences in children's ministry through a variety of activities. It is the goal of this ministry for our church to be a "teaching" avenue to those who are considering or entering ministry.

The goal of the internship is to give an opportunity to observe a balanced program of children's ministry. The student is asked to read an assigned book about children's ministry and have regular meetings to discuss the findings of the book. These sessions also give the intern an opportunity to dialogue about the experiences he/she is engaged in and the spiritual impact it is having in his/her journey.

The intern leads in the summer activities by assisting in the planning and implementation of the activities. This provides the intern an opportunity to have an understanding of the planning stages required for children's ministry to be effective. The activities also give the intern the ability to build relationships with children as well as their parents. The intern participates in leading worship by giving a Children's Sermon.

Some of the activities for the summer include VBS, Passportkids! Camp, Day Camp, and one-day or short-term events. The VBS experience gives a variety of opportunities for leadership development. During VBS the intern works closely with the Minister of Children in seeing that the details of the week are completed. Passportkids! Camp gives the intern an opportunity to build relationships with the campers as well as providing leadership during church group times. Day Camp is a week-long camp for KG-3<sup>rd</sup> grade, which the intern is responsible for planning and implementing with the assistance of high school students as counselors.

To enable the intern an opportunity to see a complete overview of children's ministry she/he is involved in the Sunday School classes of both preschool and children on a rotating basis. Worship Care also provides the intern with the knowledge of how teaching extends through the worship hour with preschoolers. Risk management and security issues of the church are also important tools in learning about ministry that is covered during the internship.

Often a task that is overlooked in an internship is the purchasing of supplies and maintenance of a quality supply room. We have included this in the internship program to provide the knowledge of what is needed and how to plan for the purchasing, which leads to an understanding of budgeting.



A very valuable tool that is provided for the intern is an opportunity to participate in a one-hour weekly session with our Pastoral Counselor during the ten weeks. It is through this opportunity the intern will recognize that being emotionally healthy is as important as being spiritually healthy in the ministry journey.

As a church our goal is to provide a holistic approach to Children's Ministry and it is the same goal for the internship program. It is through this internship that interns can discover their potential and gifts for ministry. We consider ourselves "partners" with God in helping develop and train leaders for the future ministry of the church. CBF/GA

## Leadership *Continues from page 6.*

Recently, *Current*, the CBF Young Leaders' Network, met for their annual retreat in Austin, Texas. The theme was "Let Justice Roll." Worship leaders were Adam Taylor of Sojourners and Suzii Paynter of the Texas Life Commission. Topics of breakout sessions included discussions from a *Christian Response to World Hunger* to *Starlight Ministry*, a hospitality ministry to exotic dancers. Young CBF leaders are constantly seeking ways to creatively live out the gospel of Jesus Christ, and to help guide congregations into fulfilling God's mission around them.

Some might be surprised that there are over 1200 leaders nationwide in CBF life between the ages of 18-40. Some of these are lay leaders in their churches.

Many of them are seminary trained ministers. They serve in churches ranging from very traditional to ultra-contemporary and as pastors, student ministers, chaplains, counselors, bus drivers, deacons, and Sunday school teachers.

Georgia is obviously a very important conduit for nurturing, training, and sending out young leaders. Georgia hosts a number of vibrant moderate churches which support not only McAfee School of Theology, but also events like March Mission Madness, summer mission opportunities, undergraduate scholarships, along with ministerial, and lay educational support. CBF/GA

# THE SHILOH NETWORK: Helping Learned Congregations Become Teaching Churches

Jake Hall, Pastor of Heritage Baptist Fellowship, Canton, and Coordinator for the Shiloh Network

As graduates nationwide cross the stage and receive diplomas, I realize that this month marks nearly four years since the hooding ceremony at my own graduation from Divinity School. As I approach my first anniversary as pastor of Heritage Baptist in Canton, Georgia, I have been wondering about the classmates with whom I began that journey seven years earlier and the generation of young ministers educated and entering ministry now.



Who are they?

Where are they now? If the statistics found in a 2001 Alban Institute study hold steady on the average for entering seminary students, then we face the following picture for our prospective leaders.

Out of all the students entering seminaries, 80% state they wish to enter a religious occupation, like teaching, chaplaincy, or congregational ministry. Only around 60% of seminary students are enrolled in a M.Div. track designed for professional ministry. Only around 33% plan to be ordained and serve as leaders in a congregational setting. Of those graduates who enter congregational ministry, only a portion of those remain in vital positions in ministry after five years.

Consequences of these trends are alarming. We face serious issues relating to the quantity, quality, and tenure of the next generation of pastoral leadership. What can we do to better prepare graceful and gifted students to transition into ministry effectively? How may we develop and sustain this next generation of ministers into long and healthy pastorates and

not short-term stays in ministry?

Normally, when this question is posed, fingers begin to point towards the usual suspects asking who is to blame for our current state of affairs. Often seminaries and divinity schools are the first persons of interest held accountable. The rants lament the breadth and depth of course requirements as being too academic and not very practical in the skills necessary to succeed in pastoral ministry. This places the church and the academy at odds once again. Must that always be the case?

Ministry is one of the last great Renaissance professions. It requires the minister to move between the disciplines of the academy in a congregation with the kind of skillful grace only acquired with practice.

Isn't this really a place where the church and academy can come together, a place where the disciplines of biblical studies, linguistics, and systematics can be taught in the classroom and the exercises required to develop such practical agility experienced in actual congregations?

Hospitals and medical schools have come together to create systems of education that bridge the gap between theory and experience. These "teaching hospitals" are centers of learning that bridge classroom and operating room.

Teaching Churches could provide the same kind of nurturing space for those who feel the call into the ministry as well as recent graduates. Congregations should have systems of training that guide inexperienced ministers before tossing them into the new world of pastoral visits, funerals, business meetings, and strategic planning.

In recent years a number of congregations have come together to form the Shiloh Network. Shiloh is a biblical reference to the temple where the boy Samuel first heard the voice of the Lord. The Shiloh Network exists to encourage congregations to reclaim their own inherent responsibility in the formation and education of young leaders. The network cultivates these spaces of call within congregations to create places where skills taught in seminary may be met with the agility caught in real experiences in live communities.

Shiloh member congregations agree to intentionally nurture a sense of call among their members. They promise to participate in the qualification of young ministers by supporting theological education, providing internships or residency programs, or mentoring seminary students. Network members hold each other accountable to this work by developing a Shiloh plan of action in their own community and sharing its model and mission with other network members.

Every church, large or small, has the responsibility to extend an invitation to ministry and to nurture the gifted leaders who emerge in their midst. I urge you to consider how your congregation may see itself as a teaching church. It can make all of the difference in the life of a young leader. CBF/GA

## How to join the Shiloh Network

- Congregational Plan
- \$500 donation
- Attendance at a Shiloh Gathering

[www.shilohnetwork.org](http://www.shilohnetwork.org)

## Correction

In the last newsletter we introduced the 2006-2007 CBF/GA scholarship recipients. We mistakenly omitted **Justin Nelson** from the list of second-year recipients. Justin is a student at McAfee School of Theology.

## Developmental Disabilities Ministries approves new CEO

By unanimous vote, the Trustees of Developmental Disabilities Ministries approved **William T. "Bill" Neal III** as President/Chief Executive Officer of DDM, to be effective July 1, 2007.

## Lemoyne Baptist Church Mission Trip, Biloxi, Mississippi

*Calling volunteers with warm hearts, helping hands, and the love of Christ so that His light may shine through them and deliver hope to those in Biloxi affected by Hurricane Katrina.*

In 2007 First Baptist Church of Augusta, Georgia, is continuing a partnership formed in 2006 with Smoke Rise Baptist Church of Stone Mountain, Georgia, in this relief effort to assist the Biloxi community in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. FBC volunteers depart Augusta and join in Stone Mountain with volunteers from Smoke Rise Baptist to travel to the host Lemoyne Boulevard Baptist Church of Biloxi, Mississippi.

Remaining 2007 FBC trip dates are June 7-10, Oct. 4-7, Nov. 1-4, and Dec. 6-9. For more information visit <http://www.fbcaugusta.org/index.php/ministries/missions/> or <http://www.smokerisebaptist.org/ministry/missions/index.html>.

## Financial Picture

Budget Receipts as of 04/30/07

|                |                |
|----------------|----------------|
| Year to Date:  | \$524,850.20   |
| Requirement:   | \$640,225.67   |
| Over/Under:    | <\$115,375.47> |
| Month to Date: | \$51,893.87    |
| Monthly Req.:  | \$58,202.33    |
| Over/Under:    | <\$6,308.46>   |

## SOMETHING NEW!

Alan Mitchell, Assistant to the Coordinator for Reference and Referral

THERE'S SOMETHING NEW (well, relatively new) from National CBF for ministers seeking churches and churches seeking ministers. It's called LeaderConnect. Maybe you've heard of it already. Now you can get your résumé (ministers) or church profile (churches seeking ministers) before a national audience.



Now, it does take a good block of time to fill out the form (about 70 questions each for ministers and churches), but the possibility of a match is greatly increased.

Here's some free advice: Go to the website and PRINT OUT the appropriate form. Fill out the form with pencil or pen, and then go to the online version. This will save you some time and frustration.

1) Go to: <http://www.thefellowship.info/involved/network/Placement.icm>.

Free to be the Presence of Christ

**NATIONAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

Washington, D.C.  
Convention Center

June 28-29, 2007

Auxiliary events June 27 and 30

For more information visit  
<http://www.thefellowship.info/involved/events/generalassembly.icm>

2) At the bottom of the page, click on "Go to LeaderConnect-CBF."

3) Then choose "click here if you are a church" or "click here if you are a candidate."

Not all "bugs" may be worked out yet, so be prepared to exercise patience (even if you didn't pray for it). Let us know what you think about this new ministerial job site.

## Seminary Bubble *Continues from page 5.*

lonely stages of grief? The list could go on and on and on ... but you get the idea. Seminary gives you tools that help you navigate your way through the myriad of situations you face in congregational ministry. There is no way it can adequately prepare you for every situation you will face. There is no template for congregational ministry because there is no template for people; and at the heart of it, congregational ministry is about ministering to people.

Even with these challenges, the transition from the classroom to congregational ministry is exciting and invigorating. It is this way, because when you are in it you find yourself finally getting to do what you have felt so called to do. I found that what looked like challenges to me really were opportunities to carry out the calling I received years before. When I saw it through that perspective, I was enlivened by the challenge rather than discouraged. Congregational ministry is not easy, and it is a beautiful opportunity to be a minister of the gospel. I am grateful for the seminary training I have received, and I am equally glad that I have had the opportunity to use that training in the life of one congregation. The journey has not always been smooth and safe, but I have known that I have been loved through it all. CBF/GA



# Shouts of Joy or Sounds of Weeping?

Darrell Watson, CBF/GA Moderator

*And all the people gave a great shout of praise to the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid. But many of the older priests and Levites and family heads, who had seen the former temple, wept aloud when they saw the foundation of this temple being laid, while many others shouted for joy. No one could distinguish the sound of the shouts of joy from the sound of weeping, because the people made so much noise. And the sound was heard from far away. (Ezra 3:11b-13)*

WHEN THE JEWISH EXILES came back to Jerusalem and began rebuilding the Temple, some wept while others shouted for joy. I wonder if this passage reflects where we are in the life of CBF of Georgia.

Since our inception, the backbone members of CBF/GA have been those who were instrumental in making the GBC and SBC the great organizations they were prior to the conflict. With much prayer and sacrifice, my moderate Southern Baptist foremothers and forefathers helped

to create an outstanding denomination and then experienced a peak in the life of the denomination. These same faithful few are now facing the building of a new temple. In the state of Georgia they have moved from seeing over 3,000 churches contributing to a common cause to less than 200 churches supporting a common mission. No wonder there are times we still hear the sounds of weeping.

Then there are people like me. I have never attended a Southern Baptist Convention (nor do I ever intend to). I was too young to be a participant in the building of our nation's largest Protestant denomination. CBF and CBF/GA are my legacy, my contribution to the next generation. I am excited about how we have developed as a fellowship along with all that we are doing to grow God's Kingdom and love God's people in this state and across the globe. Yet, I know I must temper my enthusiasm in order to respect those who are going about this temple-building business for the second time.

Over the past decade the foundation of this second temple has been laid. Now CBF/GA is ready to erect some walls, construct the rooms,

and put in some beautiful windows. It will take all of our hands to see the construction of this second temple through to fruition.

During my tenure as moderator, we will seek to engage the Coordinating Council, pastors, and laity in a variety of brainstorming sessions. Our coordinator, Frank Broome, is challenging us to develop a strategic plan regarding our financial health, the establishment and development of an endowment, the content and frequency of meetings, the definition of partnerships, and the means of helping our participating churches stay healthy and thrive. We are blessed to have so much wisdom guiding us, for there are many among us who have already been successful in this temple-building business. We are equally blessed to have those with new insights and youthful enthusiasm. But whether we are weeping, shouting, or doing a little of both, we must move forward together to see this new temple fully constructed. And we must never forget that the purpose of our building is for the advancement of God's Kingdom. CBF/GA

## Fellowship *Continues from page 3.*

The theme for our second semester was "why we are Baptist." We heard many personal life stories from different speakers about why they are Baptist, what it means to be Baptist, and what they enjoyed most about being Baptist. One speaker considered us the "most interesting," another adamantly enjoyed "the way we do missions," and one appreciated the "freedom to interpret Scripture" and the "priesthood of all believers." These were just a few things that stuck in my mind as we come to a semester's end, but they have been food for thought and have helped me develop a trustworthy perception of Baptists whom I am honored to represent.

My favorite part about CSF is our service to the community. In our fall semester on the weekend closest to September 11<sup>th</sup>, we helped paint a house with the CBF program *11 on 11* in remembrance of the tragedy on September 11, 2001. This past semester we have begun to be involved with the Diversity House by playing games, talking, and laughing with the residents there. The Diversity House accommodates people who are HIV positive or have the AIDS virus. These people are some of the most fun-loving and friendly people I have ever met, and we realize that they need our love and friendships. After a couple of visits this semester we have already planned continuous

*Continues to next page.*

## Don't Make Them Swim on Their Own

Frank Broome, Coordinator

DAN ARIAIL, THE FORMER PASTOR of Maranatha Baptist Church in Plains, occasionally sends me an email to brighten my day. The other week he hit the jackpot. He has discovered a funny thing about Google. If you go to Google and click on "maps," then "get directions," and then type "New York" in the first panel and "London" in the second panel, this is part of what you get.



You will find 63 total steps. Here are step numbers 20-25. Make sure you pay special attention to step number 24.

After I stopped laughing, I realized how those directions are like the methods we have used to develop leaders. We give our young leaders a set of instructions through high school, college, and seminary, and then we toss them in the water and tell them to swim 3,462 miles. The set of instructions is usually very specific, but once the leaders are in the water, the instructions often don't apply.

A couple of years ago, Dr. Alan Culpepper and I met to discuss a grant proposal he was working on related to the Lilly Foundation. He wanted the support of a larger Baptist family. I was more than happy to sign the dotted line on behalf of CBF/GA. The resulting grant allowed for over twenty internships to be created. These internships are designed to help our young leaders navigate the waters of the local congregation. In my view this effort has been very successful, and Dr. Culpepper needs to be thanked for his foresight.

|     |   |          |
|-----|---|----------|
| 20. | Take exit 24 A-B-C on the left toward I-93 N/Concord NH/S Station/I-93 S/Quincy | 0.4 mi   |
| 21. | Merge onto Atlantic Ave   | 0.8 mi   |
| 22. | Turn right at Central St  | 0.1 mi   |
| 23. | Turn right at Long Wharf  | 0.1 mi   |
| 24. | Swim across the Atlantic Ocean  | 3,462 mi |
| 25. | Slight right at E05   | 0.5 mi   |

### Swim 3,462 miles?

consider working with us to make such internships possible for a greater number of future leaders. Otherwise we will be tossing our best and brightest into the water and telling them to swim on their own. CBF/GA

If you want to do something that makes a difference, a real difference, in the life of a young leader and in the life of the church,

### Fellowship *Continues from page 10.*

activities for next semester and are anxious to become active in their lives.

Lastly, I am thankful to have a group of open-minded, moderate Baptists on Mercer's campus. It seems like a rare thing to have such a group of people in the heart of Georgia, but we are "alive and well"! I pray that our passions to serve Christ will continue to grow so that we may be servants to the least of these. A thousand "thank-you's" for your much needed support! CBF/GA

### Thank You from CBF/GA

CBF/GA would like to thank **Jason Loscuito** and **Alysha Keyser**, two young leaders, for the leadership and support they have given to CBF/GA over the past year.

Jason served as the inaugural Cooperative Student Fellowship Interim Campus Minister at Mercer University. He did a remarkable job assisting in the establishment of CSF at Mercer and has helped CSF become a comfortable place where students can ask questions and explore their faith. We congratulate Jason as he begins a new chapter in his life as Chaplain at Converse College in Spartanburg, SC.

Alysha Keyser has worked as a student intern for CBF/GA this past year. Her talents and skills have greatly enhanced the day-to-day operations of CBF/GA. We celebrate with Alysha as she graduates from Mercer University and looks forward to matrimony.

CBF/GA and CBF/GA staff greatly appreciate your hard work. Know that both of you will be greatly missed. We know you both have bright futures ahead of you!

.....

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.

# COMING UP

## ■ June 7-9

### “African Americans in Baptist History”

#### Baptist History & Heritage Society Annual Meeting

Campbellsville University, Campbellsville, KY

For more information visit [www.baptisthistory.org](http://www.baptisthistory.org) or call Pam Durso at 615-371-7937.

## ■ June 11-15 and 18-22

### Touching Taliaferro With Love

#### Summer Camp

For more information or to volunteer contact Ann Peisher by calling 706-549-7032 or emailing [apeisher@uga.edu](mailto:apeisher@uga.edu).

## ■ June 25-29

### Touching Taliaferro With Love

#### Baseball Camp

For more information or to volunteer contact Ann Peisher by calling 706-549-7032 or emailing [apeisher@uga.edu](mailto:apeisher@uga.edu).

## ■ June 28-29

### CBF National General Assembly

Washington, D.C.

## ■ June 28

### CBF/GA State Meeting

Constitution Ball Room, Grand Hyatt, Washington, DC

3:45 p.m.

## ■ July 17-20

### Alleluia! Church Music Conference

Baylor University

Presented by Baylor University Center for Christian Music Studies. For more information visit

[http://www.baylor.edu/christian\\_music/](http://www.baylor.edu/christian_music/).

## ■ Aug. 1-3

### Baptist History Celebration

First Baptist Church, Charleston, SC

For more information or to register for the event, go to <http://www.baptisthistorycelebration.org>.

## ■ Nov. 4-5

### CBF/GA Fall Convocation

FBC Savannah

Speaker: Charles Bugg, Professor of Church Ministry and Leadership at M. Christopher White School of Divinity, Gardner-Webb University

## 2008

## ■ Jan. 30 – Feb. 1

### Celebration of a New Baptist Covenant

Atlanta, GA

For more information visit <http://www.newbaptistcovenant.org>.

## ■ Feb. 29 - Mar. 2

### March Mission Madness

Highland Hills Baptist Church

## ■ March 7-9

### March Mission Madness

FBC Augusta

## ■ April 4 – 5

### CBF/GA General Assembly

Wieuca Road Baptist Church, Atlanta

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