

VISIONS



COOPERATIVE
BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP
OF GEORGIA

OCT/NOV 2009

CBF OF GEORGIA 2009 GENERAL ASSEMBLY NOVEMBER 8 - 9 • FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH DALTON

Preaching COMFORT & CONFRONTATION



Sermon 1: Luke 16:19-31 – “A Great Chasm”
Sermon 2: Psalm 19:1-9 – “What’s Going On in Here?”

Sunday, November 8

- 4:00 p.m. Coordinating Council Meeting
- 6:00 p.m. Registration
- 6:45 p.m. Pre-service Music
- 7:00 p.m. Worship – Speaker, Tom Long
- 8:30 p.m. Dessert Reception

Monday, November 9

- 7:30 a.m. Baptist Heritage Council Breakfast*
- 8:30 a.m. Registration
- 9:00 a.m. MEL Talks
- 10:30 a.m. Break
- 11:00 a.m. Conversation with MEL Talkers and Breakouts
- 12:00 p.m. Luncheon** – Speaker, Tom Long
- 1:00 p.m. Business Meeting
- 1:30 p.m. Network Gatherings

*For tickets to the Baptist Heritage Council Breakfast, email baptistheritage@bellsouth.net or call 706-583-8618. Breakfast costs \$10 per person.

**For tickets to CBF/GA's Monday luncheon, please contact Suzanne Powell at spowell@cbfga.org or 478-742-1191, ext. 21. Reservations are required. Lunch costs \$10 per person.

Main Speaker, Tom Long



Thomas G. Long is the Bandy Professor of Preaching at Candler School of Theology at Emory University in Atlanta. He has previously taught preaching at Princeton, Columbia, and Erskine seminaries. Dr. Long is the author of several books on preaching and worship as well as biblical commentaries on Matthew and Hebrews. He served as the Senior Homiletics Editor of *The New Interpreter's Bible*. His latest books are *Accompany Them with Singing: The Christian Funeral* (2009), *Preaching from Memory to Hope* (2009), and *The Witness of Preaching, Second Edition* (2005). His wife, Kimberly, also a Presbyterian minister, is Professor of Worship at Columbia Theological Seminary in Atlanta.

More information on directions, childcare, hotels and info for vendors on page 12.

MUSIC IN WORSHIP

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Save Yourself Time
at the Assembly!
Pre-register Online

- 1 Visit www.cbfga.org.
- 2 Click on the link for the pre-registration form.
- 3 Fill out the form.
- 4 You will receive a confirmation email with information about the Fall General Assembly.
- 5 Come by the registration table when you arrive at FBC Dalton. Your name badge and other helpful materials will be waiting for you.



CBF of Georgia 2009 Fall General Assembly Additional Speakers

Beavers



Broome



deClaissé-Walford



Edwards



Huddlestun



Kinnersley



Marx



(MEL Talks speakers will also lead breakout sessions.)

MISSIONS

Grace Powell Freeman: Live a Missional Life: Being the Presence of Christ through Your Passion

The twenty-first century global missions world is changing quickly. New kinds of mission engagement, missional networks, and communities of missional practice may be new concepts, but they are avenues to being the presence of Christ in ways never before imagined. God has called you to be a missionary! God has placed a passion within your heart! Come see, discover, and journey with others in the exciting world of twenty-first century missions!

Grace Powell Freeman serves as the Director of Global Missions Operations for the National office of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

EDUCATION

Jana Kinnersley: The Power of God at Home

The family is the most important and influential factor in a child's spiritual formation. Many parents today leave the privilege and responsibility of nurturing their child's spirituality to the church. Parents are overwhelmed and under-equipped for the role of children's minister within their homes. The goal of this talk is to inspire, equip, and empower parents and family members to create opportunities for their children to experience God in their daily lives, not just while at church. When God is part of everyday family life, lives are transformed. Our job as parents is to teach children how to have a faith of their own.

Jana Kinnersley is earning her doctor of ministry degree, teaching ministry to children as an adjunct faculty member at McAfee, and serving as Children's Minister in her own home.

EDUTAINMENT

Carey Huddlestun: Growing Up Baptist

Like many of you, Carey has grown up Baptist. While some consider growing up in a Baptist family a good reason to seek serious therapy, Carey shares how these life experiences can turn out to be an integral and positive part of our missional

journey and Christian education. And a little magic and music may be involved!

Carey Huddlestun is the Minister of Music at Milledge Avenue Baptist Church, Athens. In 2008, relying on his interest in magic and his background in music and education, Carey began the Learning through Wonder Company (learningthroughwonder.com).

LEADERSHIP

Bill Underwood: Redefining Baptist Higher Education in the 21st Century

As Baptists spread across North America, they founded what would become many of our leading universities, including Brown, Chicago, Wake Forest, Baylor, Richmond, Furman, Mercer, and Samford. Over the past century, however, a number of once-leading Baptist universities have dropped their Baptist identity altogether. Others have begun to redefine their relationships with sponsoring Baptist associations as denominational support for higher education has declined and threats to academic freedom and integrity have increased. As one of our leading Baptist universities, Mercer has been at the forefront of an ongoing conversation about the future of Baptist higher education. This talk will share a number of conclusions about that future.

Bill Underwood serves as the eighteenth President of Mercer University. Prior to joining Mercer, he served at Baylor University as Interim President and held the prestigious Leon Jaworski Chair at the Baylor School of Law.

BreakOUT Sessions

Wade Beavers: Christian Giving after the Great Recession

Have you or other people you know been hit hard by the recent economic crisis in our country? Come and hear Wade Beaver discuss how this crisis has affected individuals and their perspectives on money, faith, and stewardship. In this breakout, you will explore the spiritual opportunities arising out of this shift in perspective. In addition you will hear

how those most affected can restructure their lives and their lifestyles in response to the timeless truths that have been rediscovered in this financial cycle.

W. Wade Beavers, the Chair of Deacons at the FBC Gainesville, is an attorney and the President of Beavers Transaction Group, P.C., a commercial real estate law and consulting firm.

Frank Broome: Characteristics of Growing Congregations

We will review twenty-eight characteristics that most growing congregations have in common. These characteristics were identified by a Hartford Seminary study of fourteen thousand congregations. These congregations exhibited significant numerical growth over a five year period. Breakout participants will be encouraged to reflect on these characteristics, especially as they relate to their own local congregations.

Frank Broome is the Coordinator of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Georgia.

John and Casey: Holistic Ministries in Southeast Asia

John and Casey have recently returned to Georgia from Southeast Asia, where they served as CBF Field Personnel. Come hear their story about the holistic ministries through which they served with their teammates, both CBF Field Personnel and local partners. John and Casey most directly ministered through a clean water project and tutoring program. The clean water project brought clear, filtered water to people who, until now, only had the option of using extremely dirty river water for all of their water needs, including drinking. The tutoring program sought to supplement the education and health of poor children living in a very rural area where quality and value of schooling is not high. While their teammates continue these two projects, they also minister through an example farm, a medical boat, and educational programs concerning human trafficking. Join in as John and Casey share their experiences and lessons learned in holistic ministry.

John and Casey ministered in Southeast Asia for two years, helping to build up a clean water program and to establish a local team that could carry on that ministry once their term ended.

Nancy deClaissé-Walford: These Are the Words

Readers of the Old Testament encounter a number of meaning-laden words in the text. We are told that Abraham believed God, and God reckoned it to him as *righteousness* (Gen 15:6). God described himself to Moses as *merciful* and *gracious* and abounding in *steadfast love* and *faithfulness* (Exod 34:6). In Leviticus God commands the people, “You shall be *holy* for I the LORD your God am *holy*” (Lev 19:2). What do these words—*righteous, merciful, gracious, steadfast love, faithfulness, holy*—mean, really mean? This session will explore these words and others and help you to discover their rich meanings within the context of the Hebrew language and the Old Testament.

Nancy deClaissé-Walford is Professor of Old Testament and Biblical Languages at the McAfee School of Theology at Mercer University.

Mark Edwards: Celebrating Grace Hymnal

Bring creativity and richness to your worship experiences with *Celebrating Grace Hymnal*, a new worship resource slated for release in spring 2010. Comprehensive and practical, the *Celebrating Grace* family of resources includes The Worship Matrix™, an interactive worship planning tool. Learn more about the *Hymnal* and discover a wealth of new worship materials designed to enhance the music ministry of any church.

Mark Edwards “retired” in October 2007 to become the Worship Resource Manager for the Celebrating Grace Hymnal.

Judy Marx: Blessings and Curses of Inter-religious Dialogue: A Jewish Perspective

In the South we “swim in the sea of faith.” As a local rabbi once said, “The Jewish community just assumes that even the water here is Baptist.” If we are trying to stay on the path of building a better world, then we must learn to live comfortably with people who have different religious traditions. For the past several years, American Jewish Committee in Atlanta has begun to wade into that sea of inter-religious dialogue. The dialogues do not always go smoothly; that sea can be rather turbulent. In this workshop we will discuss personal and institutional obstacles to dialogue as well as re-affirm the spiritual and communal rewards for engagement.

Judy Marx became the Executive Director of American Jewish Committee’s Atlanta Chapter in 2006, after seven years as Associate Director. Judy has been a teacher of Jewish ethics and theology for the Florence Melton Adult Mini-School at the Marcus Jewish Community Center of Atlanta since 2001.

Peter McCall: CareForTheTroops: Helping Congregations Support Returning Veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan

Most are familiar with the reports of the mental health and PTSD-related-problems suffered by military members and their families. Government organizations are working hard to improve their support capabilities, but the civilian parts of our society need to help also. Sooner or later these problems will end up in our civilian laps and in our congregations. CareForTheTroops is attempting to equip the civilian elements of society with the capacities to be helpful. It wishes to do this through training of clinicians, congregations, and community leaders in military ministries, thereby improving the congregation’s overall capability to help those with needs and seeking help. This seminar will describe the effects of CareForTheTroops to “build a better net” to catch those who need help before they fall too far and reach moments of desperation.

Peter McCall is a West Point graduate and a veteran, having served on active duty and in the Reserves for ten years. He is the Executive Director of CareForTheTroops, Inc., an IRS approved 501(c)3 Non-Profit, focused on improving the availability of mental health care for veterans and their families returning from war zones.

Directions, childcare, and hotel information and info for vendors on page 12.



Coming Home through the Hymns

Hymns—they are an important and significant way that we pass on and teach our faith.

by **Nikki Hardeman**

On my Facebook profile, under the favorite music section, I list a fairly eclectic mix of artists to which I listen and enjoy. The last sentence in the section says, “I also love hymns because they speak the language of my soul.” This statement says a lot about me and how I grew up. My father was a preacher, and I was in church every Sunday singing out of the *Baptist Hymnal*. The songs in that book shaped me and my faith in ways that I did not begin to understand until many years after I had learned them. When I sing them now, I understand more about what those hymns were teaching me as I sang them over and over again in earlier years.

When I was four and five years old, I attended a church that had a monthly hymn sing on a Sunday night. Someone would raise his or her hand, call out a number, and then we would all sing the requested hymn. I could always be counted on to raise my hand and make a request for number one. Everyone knew that this was my number. I always chose that number because it was easy to find and I knew the words. However, what I came to understand later is that *Holy, Holy, Holy* is a beloved hymn of mine that informs my understanding of God’s majesty and greatness. Each time I sing it, I feel like I am coming home.

There are so many hymns that have had a profound impact on my faith, and many of them have stories to

go along with them. I will never forget the time when, riding in the car with my mother, I heard the combined Brigham Young Choirs sing *Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing*. They got to the line, “Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it, Prone to leave the God I love,” and I truly felt a sense of repentance. That music, the way they sang it, and the words of the song capture what I knew to be true—that I have a tendency, as we all do, to wander away from the life God calls us to live. *Turn Your Eyes upon Jesus* became important to me during a time in my life when my world was spinning too fast and I needed something constant to which I could cling. Now, when my world starts spinning, I find that I start humming the chorus to that great hymn.

I Love to Tell the Story landed in my top five favorite hymns when I was struggling to understand my calling to vocational ministry. Through that song, I learned that I am simply called to tell my story of grace in the hopes that it is helpful to someone else. Each time I sing one of these hymns, I am reminded of a significant moment in my faith journey, and I feel as though I am being led home.

As I got a little older, I began to learn hymns that were not in the *Baptist Hymnal*. Hymns that have become meaningful to me recently are hymns such as *God of the Women*, by Carolyn Gillette, and *As Tender as a Mother Hen*, by Mary Louise Bringle. These hymns have had a profound impact on my faith by showing me a different side of God that I was not taught as I grew up in the church. Even though these hymns are not a part of my “growing-up faith,” they still bring me home because they point me toward my Creator in a way that makes me feel at home.

Hymns—they are an important and significant way that we pass on and teach our faith. We must strive to keep them a part of the conversation of our faith and work to diversify what we pass along.

Nikki Hardeman
Associate Coordinator
for Congregational Life
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Energizing Traditional Worship with Congregational Singing

I believe that the more we imbue the two to three hymns we sing each Sunday with refreshing and new ideas, the more our congregations will look forward to worship. **by J. Loyd Landrum**

A few years ago in a choral workshop, a leader of one of the classes was asked why he thought contemporary music was making such fast inroads in Baptist churches. His answer was short and to the point when he said, “It is our fault, for those of us in traditional worship services have done almost exactly the same thing with our hymn singing for forty to fifty years.” He went on to say, “Contemporary music **energizes** worship services, especially for younger people.”

This hit me hard for at that time I had been a full-time minister of music for over thirty years and realized he was exactly right. Yes, I had given little attention to energizing congregational singing.

I returned to my church determined to make some changes.

—The first thing I did was to examine my record of the hymns I had sung Sunday by Sunday. I was going to make an effort not to repeat a hymn more than three times a year.

—Then I met with my organist to tell her of my plans to ask her to use different introductions, dynamics, and tempos when playing registrations.

—Occasionally I would use a different solo instrument in our brass choir to play the introduction for a hymn with the organ coming in on the last line.

—I also would leave off all the instruments and sing a certain stanza a capella. I bought new anthems for my choir that called for participation by the congregation on hymns. (The congregation really enjoys this.)

—I would stop the singing and have the congregation read a stanza.

—I would introduce a new text and or tune by having a congregational rehearsal a few minutes prior to the start of the worship service. It is most difficult to introduce a brand new tune without having some plan for the congregation to at least have some knowledge of “how it goes.”

—I would constantly look for new, meaningful texts—especially ones that I could use with well-known hymn tunes.

—From time to time I would use a soloist to sing a stanza of a hymn. (Occasionally I would post the soloist in the congregation.)

—Sometimes a singing family with father, mother, and a child or two would sing a stanza or two.

—I might say a few words about the author or composer or give an interesting fact that might make the hymn more meaningful.

—The old method of lining out a hymn is still effective. For a call to worship, line out phrase by phrase

Brethren We Have Met to Worship using the BEACH SPRING tune.

I first heard this done by the late William J. Reynolds and could hardly wait to get home to try it out on my congregation. I promise you that the congregation will repeat your lines with gusto.

—Almost every church of any size will have members who played band or orchestral instruments in the past. Search them out, and perhaps you could develop an ensemble that could play the hymns. Such a group can add much energy to hymn singing.

I hope these suggestions will be helpful in making congregational singing more interesting and exciting. I believe that an innovative minister of music could add other ideas, and I encourage and challenge the music leadership in our churches to do so.

I believe that the more we imbue the two to three hymns we sing each Sunday with refreshing and new ideas, the more our congregations will look forward to worship. I believe new energy will be found in the process.

Loyd Landrum is Minister of Music Emeritus at Vineville Baptist Church, Macon, where he served for thirty years. You may wish to contact him at land3295@bellsouth.net.



The Baptist Pastoral Musician

Regardless of the method, the pastoral musician commits to shepherding the congregation through this process of spiritual formation found in congregational song. **by Alicia Walker**

One of the distinctive characteristics of Baptist music ministry is the fact that most Baptist churches consider their music ministers as clergy. I took this for granted while I was growing up in a typical Southern Baptist church. It was not until I began to interact with colleagues from other denominations that I understood this ministerial role as the exception, not the rule, among the larger body of church musicians. In many (though not all) mainline Protestant churches, the director of music is a highly trained musician, perhaps even in sacred music, but their congregations do not view the musician as a minister. Over my years as a music minister, I have come to cherish this gift of the church, and to consider more deeply the implications of the pastoral role I have been given.

At the time I finished seminary, my understanding of the pastoral role of the church musician reflected all the good things I learned about relational ministry: pastoral care in hospital rooms and nursing homes, counseling with youth and their parents, shepherding children as

they discover and develop their singing voices, and other facets of music ministry that emerge through connections with choir members and congregants. These things remain integral to my understanding of pastoral music ministry. Through the last decade, my concept of the pastoral role has expanded to include the shepherding of the congregation through worship and music.

Within each church is some kind of liturgy, or worship order, whether it is highly structured and based on the historical traditions of the Church, or extremely fluid and unstructured. To some degree, a congregation that gathers for worship has an idea of what will take place, and the pastoral musician is often the person who guides that process. In planning worship, whatever expression it takes, the pastoral musician forms the congregation over time. The hymns and spiritual songs sung by the congregation



hold the core of the church's faith and theology. Eric Routley maintained that the hymns sung in worship should be exactly what the congregation needs to say in that moment. In order to meet that need, the pastoral musician is called upon to know the congregation, to understand the ebb and flow of worship on a particular day as well as over the course of months and years.

This requires a bit more than opening the hymnal and picking a few favorites. It means knowing what a text says beyond just the first line. Perhaps it is a phrase in the (often neglected) third stanza that is the most appropriate response to a scripture reading. On the continuum of the church's life, a congregation needs to sing beloved hymns that affirm their faith journey and comfort them in times of need. They are also called to sing new songs that reflect growth, as painful as that may be. It falls to the pastoral musician to know when the congregation needs to be affirmed or comforted, or challenged with a prophetic voice. The prophetic challenge is always the most difficult, as every proclaimer knows. What preachers may not realize is that they are not alone in their calling to that role. Granted, the musical vehicle can make the message more palatable: a prophetic new text can be sung to a familiar tune, or be introduced by

Continues to page 11.



FRANKLY SPEAKING ...

A recent study of fourteen thousand churches in the United States that I have previously referenced includes several paragraphs specifically about music. I think they are worth reading. The figures mentioned in the three paragraphs below are simply graphs included in the study, which can be found at <http://fact.hartsem.edu/CongGrowth.pdf>.

FIGURE 15 indicates that a congregation which describes its worship as "joyful" is more likely to experience substantial growth. This relationship exists among all denominational families. However, the same

cannot be said for worship that is considered "exciting." Exciting worship is essentially unrelated to growth among mainline churches, but is strongly related to growth among all of the other faith families. So apparently for mainline congregations, exciting worship may seem too foreign or perhaps too evangelical.

The one worship descriptor that was actually negatively related to growth was "it is reverent." Congregations that say "reverent" describes their worship "very well" or "quite well" were more likely to decline than congregations that said "reverent" describes their worship "somewhat," "slightly," or "not at all." This negative relationship was strongest among congregations in evangelical denominations—suggesting that "reverence"

Little Ears among Us

From the lighting of the candles to the benediction and sending forth, we have the wonderful opportunity to teach the children who are in our midst. **by Carrie Veal**

As we gather to worship every week, there are a few common threads that bind us together. We are there to praise our Creator. We are there to enrich our spiritual lives. And we are there to experience being in the company of others as they are on their spiritual journey, sharing what God is doing in their lives. It is a wonderful time that has been a part of the Christian tradition from its beginning days. It's what connects us to one another and to the larger Christian community. But if the words we use do not enhance our connectedness to God, have we truly worshipped?

The idea of using inclusive language in worship came full circle to me when I was in college. It was my first experience at being with people who did not have great relationships with their fathers. I became keenly aware of how awkward it was for them to relate to God in fatherly terms when they did not have positive images of a father. For many the question was, "How can a father I cannot see care for me and protect me when the father I *can* see does not?" I had never thought of it like that before. It began to shape my understanding of how we speak about God.

As a Christian educator who works with children, I believe that every moment in worship is a teaching moment. From the lighting of the candles to the benediction and sending forth, we have the wonderful opportunity to teach the children who are in our midst. We teach them by the looks we have on our faces—are we engaged or distracted? We teach them by our participation—are we singing the hymns or are we staring



off into space? We teach them by the language that we use when talking about God—are we referring to God in masculine terms only? Calling God exclusively Father or King sends a message to all the listeners who have gathered that day.

Now I'm not suggesting that we use only feminine language. That would defeat the purpose of teaching that everyone is created in God's image. But if we are teaching that we are all made in God's image, then using language that only portrays God in masculine ways sends the message to little girls that they are not made in God's image. Yes, God is our Heavenly Father. But can't God also be our Heavenly Mother? God is the King of the universe, but God is also the Creator of the universe.

In those teaching moments, we need to be mindful of how little ears hear things and how little minds interpret what we are saying to them. Inclusive language becomes more important when you are mindful that the words you use paint a picture in their minds. Being mindful of language means we are being mindful of the ones we are teaching. Let us teach them well.



Carrie Veal is Associate Pastor of Children's Ministries at FBC Gainesville. She is a graduate of Mercer University's McAfee School of Theology and has a deep love for worship. Email her at theologygirl@yahoo.com.

strongly connotes stilted, less "exciting" worship among evangelicals.

Exciting worship and the use of certain instruments to make worship more exciting are strongly related to growth, and particularly so in evangelical churches. FIGURE 17 shows the relationship between growth and use of drums or other percussion instruments. Over half of the congregations that use drums "often" or "always" in their worship services have experienced substantial growth from 2000 to 2005, as compared to less than a quarter of congregations that use drums "seldom" or "never." Essentially the same relationship exists between growth and the use of electric guitars. The relationship is fairly strong in the overall set of congregations, but

considerably stronger among evangelical churches and weakest among mainline churches.

It is hard to peg where most of our CBF congregations are in relationship to all of this. We have our evangelical roots, but we are similar to mainline congregations. We want and need "joyous worship," but we don't want showmanship and gimmickry. We are "reverent," but we do not want to be stilted and boring. My hat is off to the ministers of music who every week face this dilemma and who every week are trying to encourage us to "make a joyful noise unto the Lord."

Frank Broome

Coordinator fbroome@cbfga.org

Questions and Answers about the New *Celebrating Grace Hymnal*



Next spring the *Celebrating Grace Hymnal* will be released in time for Easter. Containing six hundred hymns, the new hymnal will combine traditional hymns, new hymns, congregational songs, scripture songs, and worship readings. It will also offer online resources such as litanies, musical arrangements, and a database to assist with searching through the hymns. We asked Mark Edwards and Stanley Roberts of the editorial board to share their thoughts with us about the need for a new hymnal and the direction of music.



Why do we need a new hymnal?

Edwards: One thing a hymnal does is tell the story of its users. The Bible, of course, tells The Story; but in a real sense, a people's hymnal tracks their story of faith for a given period of time. The Baptist story has changed since the *Baptist Hymnal* was published in 1991, and it is time to script another chapter.

Roberts: There are various reasons why new hymnals are produced. To state the obvious, hymnals wear from use and thus a physical need to replace the worn product occurs. The average "life" of a hymnal is around fifteen to twenty years. When a hymnal reaches its "pew life," it is an obvious juncture for denominations and congregations to examine the hymnal they are using and see if it is a worship tool that fully meets their needs.

But to your actual question, many church musicians and pastors feel that most hymnals in common use today lack the breadth of expression needed for worship. This hymnal seeks to address those needs.

How did this need first surface?

Roberts: The idea for a new hymnal came from a variety of sources. In Baptist life the last denominational hymnal was produced in 1991, and thusly the "pew life" issue began to appear. As I stated above, for many congregations current hymnals lacked the breadth of expression needed for worship. This was broadly felt throughout Baptist life. There were some obvious voids that needed to be filled. As a minister of music, I constantly found myself trying to find hymns that spoke to things like justice, family, baptism, communion, service, mission, and the natural rhythms of the church year.

In 2005 Mercer developed a master's degree in church music and The Townsend-McAfee Institute for Graduate Church Music Studies. One of the initiatives that came from the Institute's development was to the creation of a new resource for congregational song.

What is different about this hymnal?

Edwards: The main thing that separates *Celebrating Grace Hymnal* from the rest is the strength, variety, and accessibility of its content. The organization of the book—I Will Be Your God and You Shall Be My People—makes a strong theological statement in itself. The former deals with the Trinity—God, Jesus, Holy Spirit; the latter is about the Church as the body of Christ in worship and on mission. We receive God's revelation, and we respond back to God, receiving and celebrating God's grace in both directions and every step of the way. That'll preach. It'll also sing!

The Jesus section—123 hymns—follows the Christian year based on the life of Jesus from Advent (prophecy of Christ's coming) through Pentecost (founding of Christ's church). The material is theologically and musically substantive, but great care has been taken to ensure that it is singable by the congregation and playable by the accompanist—a good many keys have been lowered and only one or two raised; some accompaniments have been altered to better "fit the fingers" and to accommodate today's "ears." True, *Celebrating Grace Hymnal* leans toward classic (not classical) hymnody, but a full ten percent of the book represents the best of "populist" material written as recently as last year or as early as the 1970s and 1980s. For the church that values its congregational heritage of hymns and desires to move forward with new hymns, while folding into its congregational song some of the new expression of faith that might be heard on Christian radio or CD, *Celebrating Grace* is the right hymnal. There are seven hymns about baptism; that doesn't seem like many, but see how that compares to the hymnal you are using now. Fifteen hymns specifically about the Lord's Supper represent an expansion as well. Additional topics often ignored in hymnals are reconciliation, justice, care of creation, perseverance, and seasons of life. Along with addressing these topics, *Celebrating Grace* will include a sampling of songs from other cultures around the world, reminding us that Christians "in all the world and every corner sing" and that we are to "proclaim to every tongue

and nation” God’s amazing grace to all.

The Worship Matrix™, our online worship-planning component is like nothing else on the market today and will be useful to pastors, worship leaders, and anyone else who plans worship on a regular basis. The downloadable supplemental music resources—orchestrations, keyboard and handbell accompaniments, congregational anthems, vocal solos, and children’s materials—are being created by some of the best composers and arrangers who understand and value the art and practice of congregational singing.

It is a strong book and a solid project. It tells a significant part of our church’s story that sometimes doesn’t get a whole lot of press. All of the above is what one would expect from the hands-on, sixty-member Committee—men, women, pastors, musicians, educators, theologians, laypersons—and staff that have been building the book nearly four years by now.

Roberts: *Celebrating Grace* is different in many ways. While maintaining a large core of hymns that are broadly standard in congregational life, many new texts and tunes are introduced. By “new” you will see the gamut from texts and tunes written in this new century to texts and tunes that have been used by other faith communities for generations. In some instances historic texts have been set to newly composed tunes, while some new texts have been wed to very familiar tunes. In all instances a sincere effort has been made to give the congregation a broader language of expression for worship throughout the church year.

We have not tried to be all things to all congregations. That is an impossible task. No hymnal can contain all the musical elements that every congregation thinks are needed—otherwise you would end up with a book that contained 1,500 hymns and weighed twenty-five pounds! However, *Celebrating Grace* is a marvelous, diverse collection of congregational songs that will find broad appeal among Baptist congregations.

One thing that is very different about this hymnal will be an accompanying online resource not found anywhere. This online component will provide church musicians with a variety of tools that can be used to strengthen congregational singing (such as orchestrations and congregational anthems) and other worship tools—readings, litanies, and educational resources for children. Also, a tool called The Worship Matrix™ is being developed that will completely change the way most worship leaders plan and implement worship.

What do you see down the road relating to church music?

Edwards: I see musical diversity’s continuing. I see a return to more substantive hymnody for use in worship, where Christian themes and thought are more developed instead of Christian sound bites merely repeated. I see stable, “classic” (again not “classical”) hymnody’s marching on while trendy, more “populist” forms of Christian song seem to be competing for the cutting edge.

Roberts: That is a question for which everyone would like

to know a definitive answer. The culture and its music have always impacted and will continue to impact the musical language of the church. This is nothing new and has existed for centuries. In the early sixteenth century, the leaders in Rome were at variance with the church music practices in Venice. The early reformers, Luther and Calvin, had very different views on church music and congregational song. Today we enjoy a great wealth of congregational song from across the centuries: Latin hymnody to English hymnody, nineteenth century gospel song to contemporary tunes.

I think the church music programs that will be successful and effective will be those that bring authenticity to the sanctuary, find the language that gives voice for their worshipers, provide a musical platform to experience the Transcendent, and seek excellence in its presentation. I fear that some church music programs are addicted to a low standard that will lead to mediocrity that inspires no one—no matter the musical language chosen.

Has there been any attempt to pay attention to issues of gender?

Edwards: Of course. Through the ages, most literature, history, and even the Bible have been scripted through the eyes of male-oriented cultures and perspectives. Historically, hymnody has followed suit. We believe that faith, salvation, God’s calling, and giftedness are without gender, but much of our “memory-bank” hymnody does not speak in those terms. The Text and Tune Committee examined every phrase of every hymn in an attempt to assemble a hymnal that would speak God’s grace to women and men and that would speak for men and women who respond back to God in worship. Are there still textual problems that will offend some? Of course, we’re Baptists! In our input-gathering and information-sharing sessions (called HymnPosium) that we conducted in more than twenty major cities and on campuses, we found people on both extremes of gender—and other—issues. Some wanted every hymn to be gender neutral, others wanted everything gender inclusive, others were offended by that whole discussion and didn’t want their favorite hymn changed at all. (See, I told you we were Baptists!) In response and as a guiding principle, the editors decided not to unduly change memory-bank hymnody, but would take extra care that the language of the new material be inclusive.

What plans are being offered to congregations?

Edwards: The pew editions are \$14.95. Any church that has been represented at one of our HymnPosium sessions since January 2008 already has a ten percent discount on its order. Any church that purchases one hundred copies will be given a free subscription to the Worship Matrix™, our online worship planning component (a \$299 value). Additionally, ten percent of the total amount of any church’s order will be credited toward the purchase of supplemental music resources—orchestrations, keyboard and handbell accompaniments, congregational anthems, vocal solos, and children’s materials—from the webstore. **CBF/GA**

Made in the USA?

While we will always be “from” a certain place and time, others have had a part in helping influence us and shape us. **by Greg DeLoach**

It has been said that I drive a unique car. There is a hardly a time I am pumping gas that someone doesn't boldly stroll up to me and ask, “Just what kind of car is that, and who makes it?” Some of my church members wonder if my car were made by the Mattel toy company. For the record I drive a MINI Cooper, and it is made in England.

Well, it is sort of from England.

The car is assembled in Oxford, England. The motor is Bavarian, but it is actually built in Brazil before being sent back to Oxford. The tires, however, are from the Czech Republic. The electronic components are from Asia. When the car was shipped to the port in Charleston, it went through another finishing process before arriving to Atlanta for me to drive home. One could say that my British car is actually from all over the world.

How about you? Where are you from? Are you from Georgia or somewhere else in “the South,” or are you from some distant mission field like New Jersey or Ohio? Whether you were born and raised in Georgia or are relatively new to our state, the truth is that many hands have had a part in all of our lives. While we will always be “from” a certain place and time, others have had a part in helping influence us and shape us.

There are some of us in the Baptist family who are literally born, raised, and shaped in the Baptist experience. But there are many of us who have already made other stops before coming here. All of us, however, have had many others to thank for contributing to our identity and our spiritual formation. Yet, we are far from being uniform, as if we are nothing more than products off an assembly line. Psalm 139 uses the description of being “fearfully and wonderfully made.”

While my age predates the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Georgia, I like to think of myself as being “from CBF/GA.” It has become my home and my place where my faith continues to take shape. You read in this newsletter about budgets, finances, and the like, but it all comes back to CBF/GA's desire to provide the space and place to partner with churches in shaping lives.

CBF/GA has played a part in shaping each of us in many ways. It is where we are from. It is where we are going. Thank you for your support that provides space and place for future generations.

Greg DeLoach

Pastor of FBC Augusta and CBF/GA Moderator
gdeloach@fbcaugusta.org

Dear Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Georgia Family,

It is with mixed emotions that I submit my resignation to you effective Friday, November 20, 2009. This change in my life comes as I sense God leading me to spend more time at home with my family. I have not entered into this decision lightly, but with much prayer and in conversation with my husband, Daniel.

It has been a joy to serve for the last two years as the Associate Coordinator for Congregational Life, and I have been extremely grateful for the opportunity. My time at CBF/GA with all of you has been both meaningful and fulfilling. When I accepted this job in September of 2007, I fully anticipated staying in the job for several years. However, I have learned that what I expect to happen and what actually happens do not always coincide. I did not anticipate making this kind of life change, and the transition has come as a surprise to my family and me. Nonetheless, we feel and sense that it is the best move for us as a family. It is my deep hope that I will continue to find ways to fulfill this wonderful call to ministry that God has placed on my life.

I have been so grateful for the opportunity to serve with the Cooperative Baptist churches in Georgia. It has been a delight to learn about the uniqueness and beauty that exist in each of these congregations. Each congregation brings something different and wonderful to the table and it is really true that we can do more together than we can apart. It has been a joy to serve with you as we have sought to be the presence of Christ in our communities and in our world. I know that you will continue to be Christ's presence as you continue to be faithful to God's calling in your lives.

The churches and individuals who make up the CBF/GA will always hold a special place in my heart, and I will continue to pray for you and your ministries. As my family and I move into this new phase of our life journey we covet your prayers for us

Thank you,
Rev. Nicole C. Hardeman

Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Georgia

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VISIONS is published six times a year
by CBF/GA. All questions and
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478-742-1191, ext. 23
or ecopeland@cbfga.org.

OPPORTUNITIES & REPORTS

WANTED: Associate Pastor: Youth Minister

Haddock Baptist Church is presently conducting a search for a new ministerial staff member to serve as Associate Pastor: Youth Minister. The candidate must have a calling and a passion for student ministry focusing on the spiritual development of youth in sixth through twelfth grades and their families. The position is open to qualified candidates, both part-time and full-time, who would best meet the needs of the church. Interested applicants may send their resumes to HaddockBaptistYouth@gmail.com or Haddock Baptist Church, 180 Ethridge Road, Haddock, GA 31033, Attn. Betty Smith, Chair, Staff Search Team.

WANTED: Senior Pastor

Island View Baptist Church (www.ivbc.org) in Orange Park, FL, is seeking an experienced Senior Pastor. To find out more, visit <http://www.cbfga.org/vocations/position-openings.html>.

Antiphony, December 29-January 2

Antiphony is a conference for college and graduate students where they can engage in honest dialogue and discussion, ask hard questions, consider new answers, and open themselves to God's leading in their lives. This year's Antiphony will be held December 29 through January 2 at FBC Decatur. CBF/GA is offering scholarships to the first twenty-five Georgians who register. To inquire about this, please call Nikki Hardeman at 478-742-1191. Visit <http://thefellowship.info/antiphony> to register and learn more.

Retraction

In the August issue of *Visions* we reported that FBC Eastman gave five hundred dollars to CBF/GA last year. That was not true and needs to be corrected. We received a five hundred dollar gift from an individual and not from the church. We thought the gift was sent to us on behalf of the congregation. It was not. We apologize for this error.

Financial Update (July-August 2009) Budget Receipts as of 08-31-2009

Year to Date.....	\$121,177.47
Requirement.....	\$140,833.50
Over/Under.....	<\$19,656.03>
Month to Date.....	\$36,955.89
Monthly Requirement.....	\$46,944.50
Over/Under.....	<\$9,988.61>

The Baptist Pastoral Musician (Continued from page 6.)

the choir or a soloist. Regardless of the method, the pastoral musician commits to shepherding the congregation through this process of spiritual formation found in congregational song.

There is yet more to the pastoral role of the church musician: forming the liturgy itself (somewhat unique to Baptist life, or at least the free church tradition), guiding the stewardship of gifts as a spiritual discipline, growing the understanding of the pastoral role of the choir, calling out the next generation of pastoral musicians. All these and more make up this life to which we aspire. The

calling is rich and deep, and like all good gifts of God grows along with us.

Alicia W. Walker has served as the Associate Pastor for Music and Worship at Peachtree Baptist Church, Atlanta, since 1999. She holds degrees from Florida State University, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, and the University of Georgia, where she is currently teaching music education. She is a founding member of Polyphony, a professional organization for pastoral musicians, and chaired the Steering Team for the 2009 annual conference. You may email her at alicia@peachtreebaptist.net.

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Coming Up!

Events Calendar

■ **October 2-4, 2009**

ReCharge, Woodland Christian Camp, Temple, GA
www.rechargecbf.org

■ **October 8-10, 2009**

2009 Calling Congregations Conference
Georgia Tech Hotel and Conference Center, Atlanta
www.callingcongregations.org/conference

■ **October 29-31, 2009**

Caring for Creation, A Scientific and Theological Response
Mercer University, Macon

■ **November 8-9, 2009**

CBF/GA Fall General Assembly, FBC Dalton

■ **February 19-20, 2010**

Now Serving: ATL, Atlanta
www.nowserving.org

■ **March 12-14, 2010**

March Mission Madness
FBC of Christ Macon and Mercer University

■ **March 19-21, 2010**

March Mission Madness, FBC Dalton
www.marchmissionmadness.org

■ **March 26-28, 2010**

March Mission Madness
Park Avenue Baptist Church, Atlanta

www.cbfga.org/calendar/

MORE GENERAL ASSEMBLY INFO

NOVEMBER 8-9, 2009 • FBC DALTON

Location: FBC Dalton, 311 N. Thornton Avenue,
Dalton, GA 30720-3466

Church Phone and Fax: Office 706-278-2911,
Fax 706-226-7729

Website: <http://www.firstbaptistdalton.com>

Childcare: Available starting at 4:00 p.m. on Sunday
for ages kindergarten and below. Cut-off for childcare
reservations is November 1. Contact Janice Kiehm at
jkiehm@firstbaptistdalton.com or 706-278-2911.

Directions: Take I-75N to Exit 328 toward GA-3/N-41.
Turn right at Connector 3 SW/S US-76. Turn left at S.
Dixie Road. Continue on S. Thornton Avenue.

Hotel: Holiday Inn Hotel and Suites-Dalton, 879 College
Drive, Dalton, GA 30720. To make reservations call 706-
529-6000 and mention the CBF/GA group code: CBF.
The room rate is \$119 (includes a breakfast buffet) until
October 17. All reservations after October 17 will be
subject to availability under normal pricing guidelines.
Contact Suzanne Powell at spowell@cbfga.org or 478-742-
1191, ext. 21, if you have any questions or special needs.

To Our Vendors: Please visit www.cbfga.org to fill out
your reservation form for the Fall General Assembly's
Resource Fair. For more information about the resource
fair, please contact Suzanne Powell at spowell@cbfga.org or
478-742-1191, ext. 21.

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.