

The Alliance of Baptists is dedicated to the preservation of historic Baptist principles, freedoms, and traditions, and to the expression of our ministry and mission through cooperative relationships with other Baptist bodies and the larger Christian community.

Craig Henry: *The new president of the Alliance*

Craig Henry, an attorney from Monroe, LA, was elected president of the Alliance of Baptists at the annual meeting on April 6. A member of the Alliance since its beginning, Craig has just completed two years as vice president.

"I'm willing to give time to serve as president because I feel the Alliance has an important place in Baptist life in the United States," he said. "I hope that I can provide some leadership to maintain that place, and to further strengthen our witness."

That witness, he said, is for the Alliance "to be a voice for historic Baptist principles, to shed light in places Baptists haven't always been willing to go and offer hope to people Baptists haven't necessarily been willing to accept."

"The Alliance," he said, "has taken some important risks in its life to reach out to people not usually accepted in other Baptist organizations."

Craig was born in Ruston, LA, and grew up in Bernice, LA. He graduated from Louisiana Tech in Ruston, and earned a law degree at Louisiana State University in 1973. He moved to Monroe and has been practicing with the same firm, where he is now a partner, since then.

He is a founding member of Northminster Baptist Church in Monroe, organized in 1989. During its first two-and-a-half years, the church

was solely lay-led. "We bought property and built a building without a pastor," he said. When the time came for the church to look for its first pastor, Craig turned to his former college pastor, Walter Shurden, for advice. "Buddy said get Welton Gaddy. We did and the rest is history." Welton, a former Alliance president, will celebrate 10 years as pastor at Northminster in December.

"Buddy Shurden is why I'm a liberal Baptist," Craig said. "He opened my mind."

Craig had been a member at Parkview Baptist Church in Monroe before leaving to help organize Northminster, where he has

served in many roles through the past 12 years. He has been a member of the church's Coordinating Council (the administrative body of the church which doesn't have deacons), sings in the choir and teaches an adult Sunday School class

He also coordinates the church's partnership with Enmanual Baptist Church in Ciego de Avila in Cuba. Since that partnership began in 1994, Craig has made nine trips to visit Northminster's sister congregation.

Beyond the church, Craig has been a member of the board of directors of *Baptists Today*, serves on the local food bank board, has acted in productions of the local theater, and has sung in the community chorus for 15 years.

Northminster has been affiliated with the Alliance since the church was organized. "One of the first corporate actions of the church was to vote to affiliate with the Alliance," he said.

Craig himself joined as an individual member even earlier. "I have been an individual member since the very beginning," he said. "I began reading in the state Baptist newspaper about this progressive group of Baptists being formed. I was intrigued by it and sent my money in even before I fully knew what it was about. In the years since, I have found that the Alliance has been a home."



**"The Alliance
has been a
home."
— Alliance
president
Craig Henry**

PURSuing JUSTICE

Pursuing justice with and for those who are oppressed is one of the commitments we make in our Alliance Mission statement. Consistent with that goal, the Peace and Justice Committee of the Board established *speaking to the Alliance on matters of peace and justice* as one of its primary tasks. To better accomplish this aim, this column will appear regularly in *connections* to assist individuals and churches in pursuing justice in the ways to which they are uniquely called. The first of these columns is inside this issue.

DEATHS IN THE ALLIANCE FAMILY

Bill Treadwell, founding member

William C. Treadwell, a founder of the Alliance and most recently associate professor of Christian education and leadership/administration at the George W. Truett Theological Seminary, died April 23 in Waco TX.

During a memorial service at Truett April 25, faculty colleague Ruth Ann Foster declared: "Many people touch hearts, but Bill molded souls. He was the most authentic human being I've ever met. He always brought out the best in the people around him."

The Birmingham, AL, native earned degrees from Union University and Southern Seminary. He served as a Christian educator in churches in South Carolina, Georgia, Kentucky, North Carolina and Texas. He also taught at SBTS and Georgetown College.

Treadwell is survived by his wife, Lu, another early Alliance leader, and his mother, Frances, also of Waco; his children, Cynthia and her husband, Franklin

LaMaster, of Chapel Hill NC; William C. Treadwell III and his wife, Christine, of McKinney TX; and Christy and her husband, James G. Somerville, of Washington DC; as well as by nine grandchildren. Memorial gifts may be made to the Treadwell Endowed Fund, P.O. Box 97050, Baylor University, Waco TX 76798-7050.



TREADWELL

Sonya Park, former board member

Former Alliance Board member **Sonya Park** died May 4 of complications related to lupus and following a fall in which she suffered a severe head injury. Earlier she had suffered a major stroke. A member of the Alliance-affiliated Woodbrook Baptist Church in Baltimore, Park was active in many good causes, including Habitat for Humanity, the Women's Center at Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond and the Shepherd's Clinic in Baltimore.

The Harvard (B.A.) and Princeton

Theological Seminary (M.Div.) graduate is survived by her parents, a brother, a sister and brother-in-law, and many aunts, uncles and cousins.

Memorials may be sent to the Sonya Park Memorial Fund at Woodbrook Baptist Church, 25 Stevenson Lane, Baltimore MD 21212.



PARK



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POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT

VIENNA BAPTIST CHURCH, a mid-sized suburban Washington, DC, congregation affiliated with the American Baptist Churches/USA and The Alliance of Baptists, is seeking to fill the position of pastor for worship arts. This person will be a team leader and resource in worship planning, music development and direction, production drama, and graphic and written arts for all ages. For further information, consult the church website, at www.vbc-va.org.

At our 2002 Convocation in Winston-Salem, three statements regarding nations where an absence of peace and/or justice is especially lacking were adopted. Our statements on Zimbabwe, Cuba, and the Middle East are available on the Alliance Web site.

The *Statement on the Conflict Between Palestinians and Israelis* was drafted by the Peace and Justice and Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations

Committees with help from staff and Ken Sehested of the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America. It refers to a group called "Churches for Middle East Peace

(CMEP)." This coalition represents 17 mainline and other Christian denominations and organizations. They have come together to raise the knowledge and involvement of U.S. Christian communities in advocacy for peace in the Middle East by building regional and local networks. It is their desire to better voice denominational positions on Middle East peace to the Administration in order to impact its policies and actions related to Israel and Palestine.

Our statement on this conflict incorporates language from CMEP's "A Christian Call for Peace." Although many of us at the 2002 Convocation might have preferred to tinker with the language, it seemed important to join our voices with those of our sisters and brothers in CMEP to call for a just peace in Israel and Palestine. In the coming months, we will determine if CMEP is a group that the Alliance should join. In the meantime, you can review their Web site at www.cmeop.org.

PURSuing JUSTICE



By Cathy Tamsberg
Chair, Peace and Justice Committee

Pullen Memorial Baptist Church in Raleigh, NC, has called **Nancy Petty** to serve as pastor alongside Jack McKinney, who suggested the new model of pastoral leadership at this flagship Alliance-affiliated congregation. Pullen, known as an innovator in Baptist life for generations, elevated Petty from her previous position as associate pastor. Writing in the church newsletter the week following her election,

Petty challenged the congregation “to move beyond this decision to focus on the more important things that Pullen has always been involved in — seeking justice, loving kindness and discovering what it means to walk humbly with our God.”

Alliance member **Furman Hewitt** is the 2002 recipient of the **Anne Thomas Neil**



Award, presented annually by Baptist Women in Ministry of North Carolina. He was lauded for having “mentored and encouraged many women to follow the Spirit’s leading into ministry.” The retired director of the Baptist House of Studies at Duke Divinity School, Hewitt said: “I can look back on a whole host of talented, God-called women I have known. I am honored to have walked with them.”

The Middle East: Assume Complexity

I find it hard to believe that two years have passed since I had the opportunity to travel to Israel and the West Bank on the Alliance-sponsored study tour. This trip was an outgrowth of the statement on Christian-Jewish relations adopted at the 1995 Convocation. In that statement, we expressed our commitment to...

Educate ...ourselves and others on the history of Jewish-Christian relations from the first century to the present, so as to understand our present by learning from our past.

Former Alliance president

John Ewing Roberts, working with contacts made through the Institute for Jewish and Christian Studies in Baltimore, organized the trip. We were introduced to the land of the Bible and modern Israel. But we were also given a glimpse into the daily lives of Palestinians – Christians and Muslims — living under Israeli control. It was out of that introduction that the Alliance formed a partnership with the International Center of Bethlehem, an ecumenical ministry that provides training, education, employment and ministry in the name of Christ to the residents of Bethlehem.

The primary lesson learned on our trip to the Middle East is that nothing is simple. I would never assume that my 10 days in Israel, my six hours in Bethlehem, make me anything but more than an inquirer. But I came back with a passion to learn more about the complex history of the Middle East. I am pro-Israel, pro-Palestinian and pro-peace.

At this year’s Convocation we adopted a *Statement on the Conflict Between Palestinians and*

Israelis. The full statement is available on the Alliance Web site (www.allianceofbaptists.org). Or you may call the office at 202/745-7609 for a copy. You can learn in Cathy Tamsberg’s article in

this issue how you and your congregation can get involved in supporting “The Christian Call for Peace,” the basis for the Alliance statement.

In our conversations at the board meeting we questioned whether we had anything helpful to offer by proposing a statement on the crisis in the Middle East. There was strong consensus that doing nothing was tantamount to pretending there is no crisis or that

people of faith have nothing to offer in the decision-making of our nation’s leaders. To do nothing is to act as though prayer is irrelevant. To do nothing, to say nothing, was unacceptable.

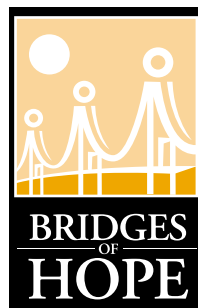
At a recent meeting of the Middle East Forum, a division of Church World Service and Witness of the National Council of Churches, participants were told an inside-the-Beltway story that applies to the present topic. In an interview with a reporter, a certain politician was decrying the simplistic messages that had characterized a successful political campaign. He called it a bumper sticker strategy, one that ducked the hard questions and the painful solutions. The journalist then asked the politician to distill his own political philosophy into a brief statement. He replied, “Assume complexity!”

Yes, the Middle East is complex and we need to make every effort to understand the complexity; to call for an end to the violence; to insist on safety for Israel and justice for the Palestinians; and, in the words of the psalmist, to “pray for the peace of Jerusalem”(Psalm 122:6).

perspectives



By **Jeanette Holt**
Associate
Executive Director



MISSION OFFERING FUNDING APPLICATIONS DUE

The Alliance of Baptists Missions Committee is now accepting applications for projects to be considered for funding through the 2003 Mission Offering. Information about the guidelines and the application for support are available on the Alliance website at www.allianceofbaptists.org, or you may contact the Alliance office at 202/745-7609. The deadline for application is Aug. 1.

2002 Operating Budget

Through April 30

Needs: \$97,512
Receipts: \$87,693

2002 Mission Offering:

Goal: \$95,000
Receipts: \$35,889

June 2002

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Chaplains: Alliance has endorsed 63

By Beth Jackson-Jordan
Chair, Endorsing Committee

The Alliance Of Baptists Endorsing Committee approved the endorsement of 25 persons to specialized ministry in the past year. This included 16 healthcare chaplains, three military chaplains, three CPE supervisors, one correctional chaplain and two pastoral counselors. We now have a total of 63 chaplains and pastoral counselors endorsed by the Alliance.

Thirty-nine endorsees gathered for a workshop at the Alliance convocation in April. There was fellowship and brainstorming about how chaplains and pastoral counselors can both contribute to and receive support from the Alliance.

CHAPLAINS RECENTLY ENDORSED BY THE ALLIANCE

Eugene Huffstutler, Christian Health Ministries in New Orleans, LA
Teresa Sanders, Federal Bureau of Prisons, Mustang, OK
Fan Aldredge-Clanton, Baylor University Medical Center, Dallas, TX
Edsil Logan, United States Navy
Stephanie Hamilton, VCU Health System, Richmond, VA
Lillian Galphin, Wake Medical Center, Raleigh, NC
Jimmie Roberts, North Texas State Hospital, Vernon, TX

Ideas such as improved communication through use of the website, utilizing the expertise of endorsed persons for continuing education of pastors, beginning a “Chaplains Corner” in *connections*, mentoring of student chaplains or counselors, more public awareness for the Alliance endorsement process, and development of policies to address ethical concerns were among the topics discussed.

As a follow-up, a directory of endorsed persons will soon be available on the Alliance website. Endorsed persons are encouraged to return the annual report forms that were implemented this year and to let the office know of any changes in address or ministry placement.

Ellis Emily, St. John’s Mercy Medical Center, St. Louis, MO
David Morton, Federal Bureau of Prisons, Annapolis, MD
Walter Coleman, Palmetto Baptist Medical Center, Greenville, SC
Anne Money, Riverside Methodist Hospital, Columbus, OH
Richard Dorsey, Baptist-St. Anthony Helath System, Amarillo, TX
Eileen Stone, Lakeland Regional Medical Center, Lakeland, FL.

Sehested returns from tour of West Bank war zone

Alliance member Ken Sehested, the Executive Director of the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America, visited the West Bank region as part of an April 15-29 Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) delegation to support the CPT’s permanent team based in Hebron. CPT is an ecumenical organization committed to nonviolent intervention in situations of civil conflict.

Fighting was still underway in most of the locations the delegation visited.

Delegation members were among those who attempted to get food and medicines to those trapped in the besieged Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem; and accompanied Palestinian children to and from school in Hebron to protect them from harassment from soldiers and stone-throwing Jewish settler children.

The delegation also accompanied a welding crew in Dura sent to repair the water pipe leading into the city which had been damaged by bulldozers operated by Israeli soldiers building a road block; helped Palestinian farmers in Jatta harvest a barley crop, providing a protective presence against random shooting by soldiers and Jewish settlers; and surveyed the damage in several cities caused not only by the fighting but also by deliberate acts of vandalism.

An article by Sehested about this trip, called “House to House, Field to Field: Reflections on a peace mission to the West Bank,” is to be printed in the July-August issue of *The Other Side* magazine. More information about is on the BPFNA website, www.bpfna.org