

connections

October 1998

... a movement of progressive congregations and individuals committed to historic Baptist freedoms, the larger church of Jesus Christ, authentic discipleship, biblical authority and open inquiry, and the proclamation of God's good news to persons and society.

For the past two years, the Virginia Council of the Alliance of Baptists has sponsored agricultural partnership projects for the Baptists of Zimbabwe.

As a result of these offerings, the students at the Baptist Theological Seminary of Zimbabwe are raising goats and chickens for use by the seminary community. The surplus is sold to provide further support for the seminary students.

The 1998-99 project, "From Soil to Self-Sufficiency," will furnish fruit trees, rabbits and a cow to

provide milk for the children of seminary students. The Virginia chapter hopes to raise \$2,000 to fund these projects.

If you would like to participate, you may send your contribution to Virginia Alliance treasurer Nancy Plott Williams, 10810 Weather Vane Road, Richmond, VA 23233.

alliance becomes endorsing agent for chaplains

The Alliance is now an endorsing body for counselors, chaplains, and ministers in specialized settings. The board reviewed and approved the necessary documents on Sept. 18. To be endorsed, a candidate must be an individual member of the Alliance, provide all the materials requested in the application, and pay a \$50 processing fee. Because different requirements govern military chaplains, they will not be considered for endorsement at this time. A four-member endorsement committee was authorized to oversee the implementation. The original committee members will be Bill Sapp of Louisville, KY, a board member; and non-board members Jim Hightower of New Orleans, Beth Jackson Jordan of Rockingham, NC, and Donna Poyner of Gainesville, FL. For application information, contact Jim Hightower at The McFarland Institute, 2700 Napoleon Avenue, New Orleans, LA, 70115. Call 504/897-5960.

Alliance Vice President Genie Dyer of Waco, TX, discusses the 1999 Convocation with Missions Committee chair Bonnie Dixon of Cary, NC. The Board of Directors met Sept. 17-19 in Washington, DC.

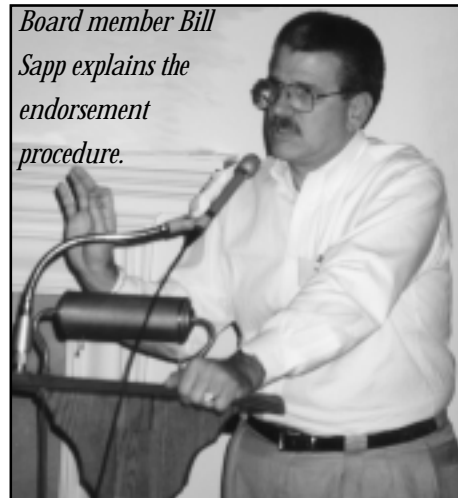


convocations: for 1999 and beyond

The 1999 Convocation will be held March 12-14 at Northminster Baptist Church in Richmond and Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond. Theological education is the basis for the theme, "And Jesus taught them saying..." A Youth Convocation will be included under the leadership of Ginny and Todd Daniel of Richmond. It will focus on cultural diversity and will provide experiential education for middle and high school students. For registration information, contact Bonnie Dixon, 217 Lochside Dr., Cary, NC 27511. Phone 919/851-6577. E-mail: bjaadixon@aol.com.

The Alliance board has accepted an invitation from Oakhurst Baptist Church in Atlanta to host the 2001 Convocation and from Wake Forest Baptist Church in Winston-Salem, NC, to host the 2002 Convocation.

Board member Bill Sapp explains the endorsement procedure.



Robert C. "Bob" Ballance Jr., pastor of Highland Park Baptist Church in Austin, TX, since 1997, has been named executive editor of *Baptists Today*. Ballance, 40, has also been a pastor at three North Carolina churches and taught as an adjunct professor at Gardner-Webb University in Boiling Springs, NC. He is a graduate of Mars Hill College and Southeastern Seminary and earned a doctor of education degree from North Carolina State University.

happenings

Baptist journalist and Alliance member *Walker Knight*, described as "a champion for social justice and press freedom," is the winner of the Associated Baptist Press 1998 Religious Freedom Award. Knight, 74, took early retirement from the Home Mission Board and started the independent newspaper now called *Baptists Today* in 1983. He is a founding member of the Alliance and was the second person selected to bring the annual Covenant Address.

Kenneth L. Chafin, well-known Baptist pastor, educator, evangelist and author, has been honored with an endowed professorship named for him at Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond. Gifts totaling more than \$250,000 from Chafin's friends in Louisville, KY, and Houston, TX, have funded the establishment of The Kenneth L. Chafin Chair of Preaching.

On July 15, triplets were born to *Tim Moore and Magay Shepherd*. Tim is pastor of Sardis Baptist Church in Charlotte, NC, and is a former board member of the Alliance.

The *Olin T. Binkley Memorial Baptist Church*, Chapel Hill, NC, celebrated its 40th Anniversary Oct. 10-11.

Greg Cochran was honored at a fellowship following the morning service Sept. 27 at Woodbrook Church in Baltimore. Cochran has served as minister of Christian education at Woodbrook for 10 years.

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cuba

Hurricane Georges dropped a lot of rain on Cuba, especially the eastern end of the island near Holguín. But churches associated with the Fraternity of Baptist Churches of Cuba have reported little damage.

On Nov. 4, a 14-member Alliance delegation will leave to attend the annual meeting of the Fraternity, to be held in Matanzas.

Northminster Church in Monroe, LA, is planning a trip to its sister church in Ciego de Avila, Cuba, in mid-November.

virginia annual meeting

The Virginia Alliance meeting will be held at Thalia United Methodist Church, 4321 Virginia Beach Blvd., Virginia Beach, VA, on Monday, Nov. 9 at 5:30 pm. Isam Ballenger, professor of Christian Mission and World Religion at Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond, will address the topic "New Questions for a New Time in Missions."

diapers and garbage bags

At the annual Baptist General Association of Virginia meeting in Virginia Beach Nov. 10-11, friends of the Alliance are invited to join in an offering of disposable diapers and 30-gallon garbage bags for The Dwelling Place, an emergency family shelter serving the Hampton Roads area. You may bring donations to the Alliance dinner or, during the BGAV meeting, to the Alliance booth.

associate chaplain needed

Applications for the position of *Associate Chaplain/Baptist Campus Minister* at Wake Forest University are being received by Chaplain Edgar Christman, Box 7204, Winston-Salem, NC, 27109. The deadline is Nov. 9. For information, call 336/758-5017.

WAKE FOREST
UNIVERSITY

At its monthly business meeting on September 20 the congregation of Northminster Church in Monroe, LA, voted without dissent to withdraw from the Southern Baptist Convention. The vote came upon the unanimous recommendation of the church's Denominational Relations Committee which had been studying the issue for some time. Former Alliance Board member Pricilla Asbury chaired the committee. Alliance Board President Welton Gaddy is Northminster's pastor for Preaching and Worship. Northminster has been affiliated with the Alliance since the church's formation more than nine years ago.

board actions

Meeting Sept. 17-19, the Board of Directors of the Alliance:

- Adopted a budget of \$235,630 for 1999, an increase of \$4,000 over the current budget. It includes a small salary increase for staff, the first in three years.
- Approved a mission offering goal of \$80,000 for 1999, an increase of \$5,000 over this year's goal.
- Authorized its Executive Committee to study and bring a recommendation on the Alliance of Baptists becoming an ordaining body.
- Authorized its Ecumenical Committee to explore the possibility of the Alliance of Baptists joining the Baptist World Alliance.

Christian-Jewish-Islamic dialogues

The Alliance's Interfaith Relations Committee will begin work to produce and distribute to member churches and individuals suggested guidelines for the development of Christian-Jewish-Islamic dialogues in local church communities. The committee hopes to have the materials for the Convocation in the year 2000.

materials being compiled

Two Alliance board members are working on special projects on social justice and sexual orientation that should be available to members at the next Convocation.

Cathy Tamsberg of Alexandria, Va., spent the summer developing a 150-page social-justice curriculum covering 10 broad topics: poverty, sexism, workers' rights, classism and consumer-

the 'ABCs' of partnership... and the NCCs and UCCs

First, the NCC: The Alliance board endorsed the preamble and purpose of the constitution and bylaws of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America, the first step toward membership in that organization. The NCC's preamble says it is "a community of Christian communions, which, in response to the gospel as revealed in the Scriptures, confess Jesus Christ, the incarnate Word of God, as Savior and Lord. These communions covenant with one another to manifest ever more fully the unity of the Church."



Ken Williams, Executive Minister of the Rochester/Genesee Region of American Baptist, was one of three ABC representatives who addressed the board Sept. 18.

Now, the UCC: During the past two years, representatives of the Alliance and United Church of Christ have been meeting to explore prospects for an ongoing relationship. The board received a report on these conversations and at the next annual meeting will recommend to Alliance members that president Welton Gaddy be authorized to name members to a formal dialogue team.

And now the ABC: The Alliance board discussed the possibility of a formal link with two regions of American Baptist Churches — the Rochester/Genesee Region and ABC of Connecticut. Three American Baptist regional representatives met with the Ecumenical Development Committee and then the full board. The gist of the informal conversations was that the groups share an openness in ministry, affirm historic Baptist principles, and wish to make connections with those who have similar ideas and commitments. No formal actions or commitments were made.

ism, racism, heterosexism and homophobia, criminal justice, global poverty, peace and the environment. That document is now being edited.

Millard Eiland of Houston, TX, a member of the Peace and Justice Committee, will edit materials on sexual orientation and the Christian faith.

Related to that issue, the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America will hire someone to interview lay leaders and pastors and write a document on the subject of how to address the issue of sexual orientation.

The Alliance and BPFNA will also

look at the feasibility of producing a video on the subject of sexual orientation and the Christian faith. The cost, estimated at \$20,000-\$30,000, will be raised from outside sources.

nominating committee

Joann Davis of Severna Park, MD, will chair the 1999 Nominating Committee searching for officer and board members. Serving with her will be Kyle Childress of Nacogdoches, TX; Martha Barr of St. Davids, PA; Pat Fulbright of Waynesville, NC; and Lee Gallman of Decatur, GA. Call Joann at 410/647-1472 with suggestions.

NEWS MEMBERSHIP

A new membership brochure is available. If your church would like copies, please contact the Alliance office.

**Operating Income
YTD: \$165,658**
**Budget Needs YTD:
\$173,718**



**Frontiers of Hope
Mission Offering
Goal: \$75,000**
Receipts: \$43,389

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Half a world separates the Baptist Theological Seminary in Zimbabwe from Brite Divinity School in Fort Worth, TX, but both are in the business of preparing students for ministry and both are supported in their efforts through the 1998



Bill Hendricks Alliance of Baptists Mission Offering. The Baptist Studies program at Brite, a part of Texas Christian University, was established in January 1995. William L. Hendricks, a former professor at Southern, Southwestern and Golden Gate seminaries, has been director of the program and lecturer in theology since 1996.

Thirty-six students are enrolled, making Baptists the third largest of the 31 denominations represented in the 250-member student body.

The program receives financial support from the scholarship endowment of Brite Divinity School, contributions from the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, individual Baptists and Baptist churches. The

Alliance dollars at work: Brite Divinity School • Baptist Theological Seminary of Zimbabwe

Alliance gift of \$2,500 pays for the quarterly printing and mailing of 1,000 copies of the *Brite Bulletin*, the newsletter designed to keep the broader Baptist community aware of the Baptist studies program.

Hendricks' immediate goal for the school is to raise enough money to provide a full scholarship to a Baptist student. A \$50,000 corpus would be enough to fund the scholarship that would be named for the donor.

His other goals include raising

\$100,000 for a lectureship, to be named for the donor; and \$1,000,000 for a chair of Baptist studies, to be named for the donor.

At Baptist Theological

Seminary of Zimbabwe, the administration is also looking for enough money to

fund professors' salaries and keep the seminary open. Remarkably, the Alliance gift of \$8,500 provides almost half of the seminary's operating budget this year.

The nearly 50 students are

mainly native Zimbabweans who are preparing to be pastors. Some of these, the administration hopes, will go on to earn advance degrees and one day return as professors themselves.

This seminary, like many others, fell upon hard times when the International Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention decided on different models for training pastor and other church workers. That left a void that the Zimbabwe Convention is still trying to fill. Adjunct professors, like BTSR president Tom Graves, have spent a term teaching at the campus and others like him are needed.

Buildings on the campus are in need of repair and an Alliance work team is planning to go there next summer to help.

Henry Mugabe, BTSZ principal, who teaches a class each winter at BTSR, is the person most responsible for the Alliance/Zimbabwe connection. One of his first students at BTSR, Alliance board member Bonnie Dixon, has provided key leadership in developing the Alliance's second overseas partnership.

Brite Divinity School	\$2,500	
Zimbabwe Seminary	\$8,500	

Henry Mugabe, center, is the first African to head Baptist Theological Seminary of Zimbabwe. He is shown here with Baptist Convention of Zimbabwe Executive Secretary John Mazvigadza and Sakina Mazvigadza.

