

# connections

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Our Mission is to make the worship of God primary in all our gatherings, foster relationships within and outside the Alliance, create places of refuge and renewal for those wounded or ignored by the church, side with the poor, pursue justice with and for the oppressed, care for the earth, work for peace, honor wisdom and lifelong learning, and hold ourselves accountable for equity, collegiality and diversity.

## FRIENDSHIP TOUR PUERTO RICO

Together with the Baptist Peace Fellowship, the Alliance is co-sponsoring a Friendship Tour of Puerto Rico Oct. 27-Nov. 1. In a release announcing the trip, BPFNA's managing director, LeDayne McLeese Polaski, wrote: "Most people in North America know little about Puerto Rico, the world's oldest colony which has been under the control of the U.S. for the past century." She said the trip's purpose "is to expose

Baptists from North America to the political, social, economic and religious realities of Puerto Rico."

For information on joining the tour, contact LeDayne at BPFNA, 4800 Wedgewood Dr., Charlotte NC 28210; 704/521-6051 (phone); 704/521-6053 (fax); ledayne@bpfna.org (e-mail).



The Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America is one of the recipients of the 1999 Bridges of Hope Mission Offering. A story about that organization's work is on the back page.

*David Long's journey to the Alliance of Baptists started courtesy of the Southern Baptist Convention in 1989. The bumps he has encountered along the way since are not unfamiliar.*

## Pastor from Bermuda finds integrity in the Alliance

David and Sue Long were missionaries with the Foreign/International Mission Board of the SBC for 18 years, serving in Recife, Brazil, where David taught at the North Brazil Baptist Seminary and was head of the school of religious education. As the conservative takeover of the convention became more heated, David and Sue began to feel a general dissatisfaction with their work and with the FMB. "We felt we no longer had a home," he said.

In 1989, the Longs were in Fort Worth on furlough. David learned about the Alliance convocation being held that year in Greenville, SC, heard that "these are who real Baptists are," thought the workshops would be beneficial, and asked the FMB to pay for him to attend. His request was granted and at his first convocation he found a "kindred feeling" among those there.

Returning to Brazil in 1989, his doubts about his future with the FMB grew but still he wasn't ready to break with the SBC. It took another three years for the Longs to make that final decision to leave their work.

"I had wanted to be a missionary since I was six years old," he said. "I had an intentional direction in my life." So once the decision to

leave the SBC was made, the Longs started looking for other missionary opportunities.

What they found was Bermuda, where David is now pastor of First Baptist Church and Sue teaches music in a private school.

They have their mission field: There are Filipinos, Canadians, British, Irish, Portuguese, and native islanders in their congregation. "Because we are involved in international work, we still have the feeling of being missionaries," he said.

This year, David and Sue Long became official members of the Alliance and David attended the convocation at Richmond, his first since that 1989 meeting paid for by the FMB. "The people I see here as part of the Alliance are the people who have the integrity we once had in the SBC," he said.

David is a graduate of Southern and Southwestern seminaries. He and Sue are anticipating having to leave Bermuda soon since they are on their third work permit and don't expect to be issued a fourth. They hope to continue their missionary work at a church in Europe.



Shalom Baptist Church in Louisville KY, is the newest church to affiliate with the Alliance. Donna Mote is pastor. In affiliating with the Alliance, the church sent a generous contribution to the operating budget and a gift of \$5,000 to apply toward the matching grant for the Fraternity of Baptist Churches of Cuba.

Alliance members Mary Ruth and Roger Crook are to be presented the 1999 Edwin T. Dahlberg Peace Award by the American Baptist Churches in the USA during that body's biennial meeting in Des Moines, IA, June 22-25. Members of Pullen Memorial Baptist Church in Raleigh, NC, the Crooks have been active in the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America. They are veteran activists in peace and justice ministries, focusing much of their attention on people-to-people work with the citizens of Cuba and the former Soviet Union. They have been active as well in all kinds of justice issues at the local, state and national levels in their own country.

# happenings

**Gene McLeod**, also an Alliance member long active in the Baptist Peace Fellowship, received a Lights of Hope Award from the Wake County (NC) School System earlier this year at its Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration. A member of Wake Forest Baptist Church, Gene was recognized along with an African-American pastor, Enoch Holloway, for work they have undertaken jointly through the Wake Forest Human Relations Council and their churches to improve race relations in their town.

**First Baptist Church** in Greenville, SC, the congregation that hosted the 1989 and 1994 meetings of the Alliance, voted on

May 2 to cut all ties to the Southern Baptist Convention. In a vote of 500-47, the church voted to "voluntarily and deliberately discontinue our affiliation" with the SBC. Unrelated to the affiliations vote, Hardy Clemons, 66, pastor of the Greenville church for 11 years, announced on May 18 his intention to retire no later than February 2000.

**Kathy Manis Findley** has had a book recently published by Smith & Helwys. It is titled **The Survivor's Voice: Healing the Invisible Wounds of Violence and Abuse**. Kathy is pastor of Providence Baptist Church in Little Rock, AR, and Coordinator of Volunteers for the Family Service Agency Sexual Assault Center of Central Arkansas. In addition, she serves on the Alliance Board of Directors.

**Pullen Memorial Baptist Church** in Raleigh, NC, is looking for a pastor. As of June 1, the job description and profile of the church are at [www.intrex.net/pullen](http://www.intrex.net/pullen). To recommend someone or apply for the position, please send a resume with the names of five references to Jack Lemons, Chair of the Search Committee, 5324 Cherrycrest Ct., Raleigh, NC 27605-4620 by Aug. 15.



Alliance member Glenn Hinson was honored on April 29 upon his retirement as Professor of Spirituality and Worship and John Loftis Professor of Church History for seven years at Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond. In a special service to commemorate his contributions as teacher, scholar, ecumenist and spiritual guide, a stained glass window installed in the seminary's prayer room was unveiled. Pictured here with Glenn are BTSTR president Tom Graves, left, and Wake Forest Divinity School Dean Bill Leonard, who spoke at the special service. Stan Hastey and Jeanette Holt attended the ceremony.

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**going:** Four members of Northminster Church in Monroe, LA, will visit their sister congregation, Iglesia Bautista Enmanuel, in Ciego de Avila, Cuba, June 21-29. The main purpose of the visit is to participate in the constitution into churches of two of Enmanuel's mission congregations in Bolivia and Corojo. This is the sixth visit by Northminster members to their partner church since the relationship began five years ago. Two other churches have trips this month to their sister congregations: Trinity Baptist Church in Seneca will send a delegation to Guanajay and First Baptist Church in Savannah will visit its sister church in Alamar.

**returning:** Several Alliance members have recently been to or are in Cuba, including a group from Mars Hill College in Mars Hill, NC, and Pullen Memorial Baptist Church in Raleigh. Also Stan Hastey spent the last two weeks of May participating in evangelistic rallies and the annual women's conference of the Fraternity of Baptist Churches of Cuba.

# cuba

New legislation has been introduced in the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives that would lift the U.S. embargo on the sale of food, fertilizers, medicines, and medical supplies and equipment to Cuba. As the Latin America Working Group on Capitol Hill emphasizes, “The time to respond to these new initiatives is NOW.”

In asking for Alliance support for companion bills introduced on April 29 — S.926 and H.R. 1644 — Mavis Anderson of LAWG elaborated, “Momentum appears to be with us because of the recent sanctions policy revision made by the Clinton Administration concerning food and medicine sales to Libya, Iran and Sudan.”

It is long past time that U.S. policy toward Cuba be reevaluated on the same basis. Historically, this country has allowed for, even helped in, the feeding and healing of peoples with whose governments we have been at war. The U.S. never has been at war with Cuba. Yet we continue to carve out a particularly hellish niche for our Caribbean island neighbor, primarily because of domestic political considerations.

While our politicians, especially presidential candidates, jockey for the support of Cuban Americans in the battleground states of Florida and New Jersey — where the largest concentrations of these fellow citizens are found — Cubans in Cuba continue to suffer severe deprivations of food and medicine.

A group of eight Alliance members will go to Zimbabwe July 15-Aug. 3 and there is still time for others to join the trip. Particularly needed are people with some construction skills and someone who can teach basic computer lessons.

Also, the group could use any of the following items: large suitcases that don't have to be returned. English Bibles. School supplies, including paperback dictionaries, solar-powered calculators, metric rulers, composition notebooks. Multi-vitamins with iron, children's vitamins, iron and other vitamin supplements. Soap and shampoo. Sheets for bandages and hospital beds. Good towels. Men's suits. Very good or new shoes. Cloth for dresses, especially African prints (cloth is available but not affordable there). Undated Sunday School, missions or devotional literature, good one-volume Bible commentaries and current theology, church history, and preaching books.

The group also needs money to help defray project expenses. Checks may be made payable to Pullen Memorial Baptist Church, and sent to project leader Bonnie Dixon at 217 Lochside Drive, Cary, NC 27511. If you would like to join the group or donate material, contact Bonnie immediately at home, 919/851-6577; at work, 919/854-4804; by fax, 919/859-1745; or e-mail, [bjadixon@aol.com](mailto:bjadixon@aol.com).

Contributions have already come from Pullen's Missions and Outreach Council, the Mission Board of Mars Hill Baptist Church, and members at Williamsburg Baptist Church in Williamsburg, VA.

## perspectives



By Stan Hasteley  
Executive Director

Thankfully, however, more and more members of both parties in Congress seem to be ready to begin the arduous process of change. These new bills reflect a deliberately bipartisan approach. In the Senate, S. 926 was introduced by John Warner, a Republican from Virginia, and Christopher Dodd, a Democrat from Connecticut. In the House, the sponsors of H.R. 1644 are Jim Leach, a Republican from Iowa, and José Serrano, a Democrat from New York. As of May 7, 15 senators and 60 House members had signed on in support.

Year after year, we in the Alliance have declared our opposition to current U.S.-Cuba policy and vowed to work to change it. During our annual meeting in March, we endorsed the legislation recently introduced. (See the May issue of *connections* for the full text of our statement.) Let me ask you now to use that statement in writing or calling both your senators and your House member to help build momentum for early consideration of these bills in the new Congress.

For some time it has been apparent that change in U.S. policy toward Cuba will be incremental. Lifting the embargo all at once is not going to happen. Yet passage of this legislation would be a beginning, a step in the right direction. Most important, from the perspective of ordinary Cubans, it would be a sign of hope that better days are ahead.

(For breaking news and regular updates on lists of co-sponsors of S.926 and H.R. 1644, go to the Latin America Working Group web site at <http://www.igc.org/lawg>).

## mission offering deadline Aug. 1

As part of an effort to assist the Missions Committee in giving full consideration to applications for next year's Mission Offering, the Alliance Board of Directors has set a deadline of Aug. 1 for submitting applications. This year's Mission Offering recipients were informed of these refinements in the application process last fall.

Application forms may be requested from the Alliance office. They will not be sent out except upon request and the Missions Committee will not consider recipients who have not filled out the form. Completed forms will be forwarded to members of the committee by Aug. 15. The Alliance welcomes new applicants as well as those who have received Mission Offering grants previously.

Application forms may be requested by regular mail, e-mail, phone or fax.

**Budget Gifts YTD:**

Operating Income: \$92,233  
Budget Needs: \$98,180

**Bridges of Hope YTD:**

Goal: \$80,000  
Receipts: \$18,927

**Cuba Grant:**

Challenge: \$23,700  
Receipts: \$19,008

*The purpose of the BPFNA is to unite and enable Baptist Christians to make peace in our warring world. We are called by God to witness to the Gospel of Peace.*

So is the mission statement of the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America, one of the 20 recipients of Alliance Mission Offering funds in 1999.

To accomplish that goal, the Fellowship is involved in a variety of activities from producing print resources to holding conferences to conducting friendship tours to resolving conflicts.

Newest among its print resources is a social justice curriculum written by Cathy Tamsberg, a project co-sponsored by the Alliance. This material is available from either organization.

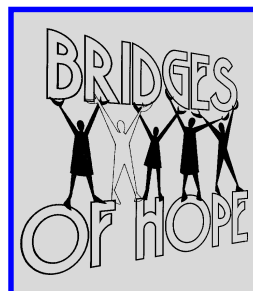
The Fellowship staff is also in the process of compiling materials on sexual orientation as a resource for churches. In August, a retreat will be held for leaders of churches who have previously discussed this issue. The leaders of the retreat — Mahan Silar, April Baker, and Brenda Mouton — will compile the information

learned into a piece that will be included in the sexual orientation packet, "Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth: A Resource for Congregations in Dialogue on Sexual Orientation."

Also forthcoming is a book compiled by Executive Director Ken Sehested of the best articles that have appeared in *The Peacemaker*, BPFNA's magazine. Most likely to be included is an article about the killings in Jonesboro, AR, which recently won an honorable mention award from Associated Church Press.

Among the upcoming conferences is the July 19-24 Annual Summer Conference to be held in Vancouver, British Columbia. Chad Myers, a scholar and lecturer from Los Angeles, will be one several speakers.

BPFNA is also jointly sponsoring a conference on human rights in Melbourne, Australia, in January 2000.



**Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America**  
**\$7,500**

The Friendship Tour to Puerto Rico, Oct. 27-Nov. 1, mentioned on the front page, is also well into the planning stages. This is another joint project with the Alliance. "Puerto Rico is a highly militarized island," Ken said. "A third of it is owned, occupied or controlled by the U. S. military."

This year's Friendship Tour, the third to Puerto Rico, coincides with the 100th anniversary of missionary work on the island.

The Fellowship also continues its Naga peace initiative in India. In February for the first time Naga leaders from various non-governmental agencies gathered in a strategy session in Calcutta to determine ways to build a just peace. Until this meeting, Naga peace efforts had been undertaken by an ad hoc group of Naga leaders working with BPFNA and other conflict managers.

As in past years, the funding provided by the Alliance goes to the Fellowship's general budget. "It provides the backbone for everything we do," Ken said.

To accommodate new Managing Director LeDayne McLeese Polaski, who began work last August, the Fellowship moved its offices from Lake Junaluska to Charlotte, NC, in February. "We had never had a managing director and we had decided that we would move the offices if we found the right person," Ken said. Ken and wife Nancy, former Alliance president, continue to live in Clyde, NC, and Ken commutes to Charlotte three days a week.

