

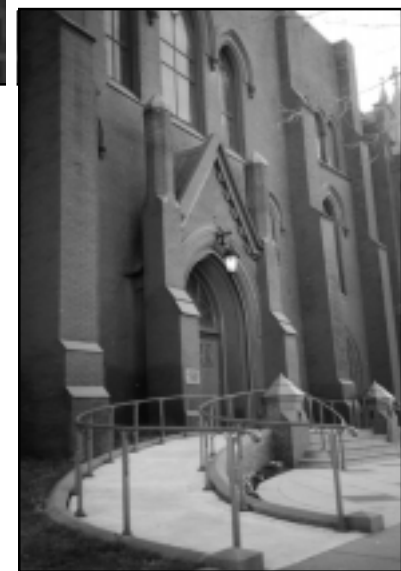
# connections

April 1998

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.

## Last year's goal: Looks like we made it

We thought we had fallen more than \$11,500 short of last year's \$75,000 Frontiers of Hope Mission Offering goal. We thought wrong! During the business session of the Convocation, former Alliance president Anne Thomas Neil of North Carolina and member Morris Vickers from Maryland, challenged those present to give or pledge enough to reach \$75,000. In just a few minutes, pledges and gifts of more than \$15,000 had been made. When all of the funds are in hand, supplemental checks will be sent to each of the 1997 offering recipients.



*The 1998 Convocation met at historic Calvary Baptist Church in downtown Washington March 12-14. During his annual State of the Alliance Address, Executive Director Stan Hasty announced that the 2000 Convocation will be held at University Baptist Church in Austin, TX, a church recently sanctioned by the Baptist General Convention of Texas for accepting gays and lesbians.*

### OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

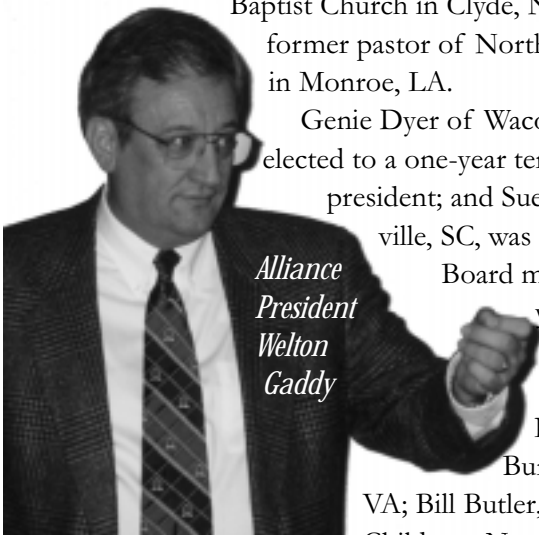
Welton Gaddy, Executive Director of the Washington-based Interfaith Alliance, was elected as the new president of the Alliance, succeeding Nancy Hastings Sehested, pastor of Sweet Fellowship Baptist Church in Clyde, NC. Welton is former pastor of Northminster Church in Monroe, LA.

Genie Dyer of Waco, TX, was elected to a one-year term as vice president; and Sue Poss of Greenville, SC, was re-elected secretary.

Board members elected to three-

year terms are: Bob Albritton of Raleigh, NC; Kathy Berry, Richmond, VA; Wanda Burton-Crutchfield, Warsaw, VA; Bill Butler, Baltimore; Kyle Childress, Nacogdoches, TX; Bill

Ingram, Berryville, VA; Ramonia Lee, Suitland, MD; Alisa Monfalcone, Savannah, GA; Jose Orraca, Kent, CT; Paul Richardson, Birmingham, AL; Bill Sapp, Louisville, KY; and Mary Strauss, Durham, NC. José Oliveras of Puerto Rico was elected to fill the unexpired term of Henry Crouch, who resigned.



*Alliance President Welton Gaddy*

### MISSION STATEMENT

*The following Mission Statement was adopted at the Convocation:*

- To keep faith with our Covenant, we:
- Make the worship of God primary in all our gatherings.
  - Foster relationships within the Alliance and with other people of faith.
  - Create places of refuge and renewal for those who are wounded or ignored by the church.
  - Side with those who are poor.
  - Pursue justice with and for those who are oppressed.
  - Care for the earth.
  - Work for peace.
  - Honor wisdom and lifelong learning.
  - Hold ourselves accountable for equity, collegiality, and diversity.

**H**oward Roberts, immediate past vice president of the Alliance, has been called as pastor of Ravensworth Baptist Church in Annandale, VA, to begin in May. He is currently at First Baptist Church, Auburn, AL.

Roger Underwood will begin work in May as the new pastor of First Baptist Church in Taylorsville, NC. He is currently Minister of Christian Education at First Baptist Church in Washington.

Mahan Siler has announced his retirement as pastor/senior minister of Pullen Memorial Baptist Church in Raleigh, NC, effective June 14. Siler has been pastor of Pullen for nearly 15 years.

Larry Matthews has announced his retirement as pastor of Vienna Baptist Church in Vienna, VA, effective June 14. Matthews began his ministry at Vienna in August 1966.

Sixteen Baptists — including Alliance members James M. Dunn, Lowell H. Fewster, Steve Hammond, Stan Haste,

Shanta Premawardhana, Ken Sehested and Nancy Hastings Sehested — were among more than 300 religious leaders who last month issued a joint statement urging the governments of Mexico and the United States to end the escalating violence against indigenous communities in the southern Mexican state of Chiapas.

The Baptist Peace Fellowship is seeking a managing director. Strong administrative skills needed. For job description/application contact: Steve Jacobsen, BPFNA, PO Box 280, Lake Junaluska, NC; e-mail: [bpfna@primeline.com](mailto:bpfna@primeline.com). Application deadline is June 15.

Northminster Church in Monroe, LA, needs a pastor. Alliance president Welton Gaddy is leaving Monroe to head the Interfaith Alliance. Northminster is a nine-year-old church of 200 members that uses a liturgical style of worship and is an inclusive fellowship. The church is looking for a pastor with special interests and abilities in preaching, worship, Christian education and counseling. Inquiries may be addressed to Pastor Search Committee, Northminster Church, 2701 Lamy Lane, Monroe, LA 71201.

**invitation:**

atlantic baptist fellowship

Alliance members are invited to participate in the Spring Assembly of our partner group, the Atlantic Baptist Fellowship, to be held June 5-6 in Halifax, Nova Scotia. For details, call or write the Alliance office.



Executive Secretary J.N. Mazvigadza participated in this year's Convocation.

**zimbabwe**

**open letter:** C.H. Chiromo, president of the Baptist Convention of Zimbabwe, has sent the following open letter to the Alliance: "The Baptist Convention of Zimbabwe applauds the partnership that has been established between us. We believe our companionship in the gospel will be catalytic in releasing the potential of ministry in each of us for church planting and development...We thank you for the invitation to our Executive Secretary (J.N. Mazvigadza)... God's rich blessings."



Paul Burden, president of the Atlantic Baptist Fellowship, was present at this year's Convocation.

**summer trip:** Board member Bonnie Dixon is still looking for volunteers for a work/ministry team to participate in a project with the Baptist Convention of Zimbabwe July 28-Aug. 14. She needs by April 25 the names of those with any interest in going in order to make tentative airline reservations. Cost is \$2,800 from Baltimore. Bonnie is also trying to raise about \$12,000 for the projects that will be done in Zimbabwe. Contact Bonnie at (919) 851-6577 for details.



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**statement:** The Convocation adopted a statement presented by Jennifer Dawson of Atlanta that calls on Congress and President Clinton to end the United States' 37-year-old trade embargo against Cuba.

**cuba**

**medical trip:** Jim Strickland, pastor of Heritage Baptist Church in Cartersville, GA, will lead a medical fact-finding trip to Cuba May 15-22.

Estela Hernández, Vice President of the Fraternity of Baptist Churches of Cuba and co-pastor of William Carey Baptist Church in Havana, addressed the Convocation. She was joined by Treasurer Elizabeth León, a laywoman from Santa Clara; and Noel Fernández, pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church in Ciego de Avila.



What is the state of our Alliance as we gather for a twelfth time? In a word, from my perspective, we are healthy. Why? First and perhaps most telling, we are a people with a clear and clearly stated vision. From the earliest days, when our first leaders put their hearts and minds to this endeavor, they envisioned a new movement made up of people willing to restate the core principles of Baptists throughout the nearly four centuries we Baptists have been a distinctive people within the larger family of God. Yet reclaiming all that is noble in the Baptist heritage was but part of the vision. The other part had to do with focusing our collective attention on the “new thing” God was beginning to do among Baptists in a time of historic transition in the whole church.

During the past year, that original and guiding vision has been re-examined as we have sought to discern the continuing work of the Spirit of God among us. Because of the good work of the Visioning Committee, named and charged as we approached the 10-year mark of our movement, we have come to another of those crossroads in our still-brief history.... This new statement does more than say what we want to do. Other parts of it declare what we’re already doing.

We are seeking and always have sought to make the worship of God primary when we come together. We have done a reasonably good job at holding ourselves accountable for equity, collegiality and diversity....

When it comes to fostering relationships with other people of faith, we can only stand in amazement at the ways God continues to stretch our vision beyond ourselves. Within the larger Baptist family, we have been blessed beyond measure with relationships we did not and could not have set out on our own to develop....

... Permit me a passing observation about the contemporary state of Baptist theological education around the globe.... One after another, schools of theology are being abandoned in favor of another philosophy of training leaders. Just as honest

theological inquiry is no longer tolerated on the campuses of Southern Baptist seminaries in this country, so is it being obliterated abroad.

Allow me to say this. I know we’ve come a long way in the Alliance from the days of intense anger and intensive grief over losing the battle for the convention. Alliance

people on the whole long since have given up bashing the convention, and rightly so, for our own spiritual health if nothing else. Yet we do not serve well the causes we say we believe in by ignoring the continuing devastation of fundamentalism running rampant.

Just as we’ve had to develop alternatives in theological education on our own shores, so the coming years will test our willingness and resolve to provide

encouragement and assistance to seminaries and schools of theology in various parts of the world. We cannot alone meet all those needs, for they are about to become an avalanche. What we can do is what the Alliance always has done — and done well. We can set our hearts and minds to assess this looming crisis and begin to explore linkages — new alliances, if you will — for these institutions....

Indeed, by this time next year, when we gather in Richmond to focus our attention on theological education as the convocation theme, the need for progressively inclined Baptists in this country to address the needs in theological education among Baptists around the world will be apparent. We must address them....

## perspectives



By Stan Hasteley  
Executive Director

*(This month and next, this column will contain excerpts of Stan Hasteley’s “State-of-the-Alliance” address, delivered to the membership March 13.)*



One of the workshops at the Convocation was on Jewish-Christian relations. David Yeager, pastor of College Parkway Baptist Church in Arnold, MD, and Rabbi Shira Lander of Baltimore, addressed several questions about interfaith dialogue. Shown here are some of the participants.

## on the web: Baptist Women in Ministry

Where can you find the latest profile about a woman serving in ministry in Baptist life? Try the new web site of Baptist Women in Ministry. Announced at the board of directors spring meeting in Washington, the new site provides information about the organization that is committed to the affirmation and encouragement of women in vocational and lay ministries. In addition, the most recent issue of *Folio*, BWIM’s quarterly newsletter, is included at the site.

Interested individuals are invited to visit the new web site and stay informed about Baptist Women in Ministry by clicking on [www.helwys.com/bwim](http://www.helwys.com/bwim).

**Operating Income**  
YTD: **\$69,133**  
**Budget Needs YTD:**  
**\$57,908**



**Frontiers of Hope**  
**Mission Offering**  
**Goal: \$75,000**  
**Receipts: \$13,755**

The two churches aren't within driving distance of each other. Their histories are different. Their needs are different. But today, Jeff Street Baptist Community at Liberty in Louisville, KY, and Providence Baptist Church in Little Rock, AR, find themselves kindred spirits as they do church in a new way with women as pastors and the Alliance as a partner in missions.

Cindy Weber is pastor at Jeff Street Community, the successor to a church started by a riverboat gambler in 1898 that was thrown out of the local Baptist association seven years ago when it called her as pastor.

Kathy Manis Findley is pastor of Providence Church, begun with the specific goal of becoming a racially and culturally diverse community of faith.

## Alliance dollars at work: Jeff Street • Providence

Providence is involved in numerous ministries in Little Rock. Its RAIN program for AIDS patients was recently featured in an article printed in the local newspaper. RAIN is Regional AIDS Interfaith Network. It works through a network of congregation-based care teams throughout the state to provide trained volunteers willing to give both practical and spiritual support to one specific person or family affected by AIDS.

Jeff Street, located in a low income inner city area of Louisville, also has diverse ministries. For example, it has a program for the homeless and works with

kids in a nearby housing project.

Jeff Street will use the grant from the Alliance to help pay a balloon mortgage payment of \$36,000 that is due this year. The mortgage is on a building that once was a machine shop now turned worship center.

Providence will use its allocation to help pay the salary of an African-American pastor as it tries to further develop its dream of becoming a church with a membership of 50% Anglos and 50% African-Americans.

"We feel it is important to our vision to hire an African-American minister to work in

partnership with me," said Kathy. "We are convinced that a racially diverse church must begin with a racially diverse staff, modeling the vision of inclusivity in God's Church. In the entire state of Arkansas, there is not even one church of any faith tradition with racially diverse pastors."

The Alliance grant of \$3,000 will fall far short of the \$11,400 needed for the second pastor's salary.

At Jeff Street, the Alliance grant of \$3,500 will be only a small part of the \$36,000 needed to pay the balloon mortgage. But it helps.

"The Alliance has contributed to us in many ways," Cindy said. "You've helped us with our homeless ministry and given me salary support when I needed it. But just feeling that there are other kindred spirits like us has been a major contribution to our ministry."

Jeff Street Community	\$3,500
Providence Baptist Church	\$3,000

