

connections

May 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.

a van for cuba newnan church makes major donation

Thanks to a major gift from Central Baptist Church in Newnan, GA, the Fraternity of Baptist Churches of Cuba has purchased a 15-passenger Mercedes-Benz van.

Of the \$25,000 purchase price, \$23,700 came from the Myrtle Arnall Mann trust fund of Central Baptist. Joel Richardson is the pastor. Alliance board member Walter Skinner is a key lay leader in the congregation.

The remaining \$1,300 was given by Kirkwood Baptist Church in St. Louis.

Leaders of the Fraternity had had no transportation available to visit churches and no way to transport volunteers working in the country.

Myrtle Mann had been a Sunday School teacher and



This new Mercedes van was purchased for the Fraternity of Baptist Churches of Cuba with a major gift from Central Baptist Church in Newnan, GA. Among those shown in the photograph are Adalberto Cuéllar, the director of the Fraternity, and Ena García, pastor of Jordan Baptist Church in Havana. Cuéllar is also shown in the photo at right with Millie Gosch of Newnan, granddaughter of the woman who made the gift possible.



church leader at Central Baptist Church in Newnan for many years until her death in 1973. The fund was established by her family soon after her death. "Foreign missions was something my grandmother really believed in as a Baptist," said Millie Gosch. "Through the Myrtle Arnall Mann Fund, her love of and generosity to foreign missions is still being carried out 25 years after her death."

CUBA: 10TH ANNIVERSARY ASSEMBLY IN NOVEMBER

It's not too early to begin making plans to attend the upcoming 10th anniversary assembly of the Fraternity, to be celebrated Nov. 5-8 in Havana. Tentative departure date for the Alliance delegation is Wednesday, Nov. 4. This is an ideal occasion to become acquainted with the work and witness of our partner group in Cuba, especially for congregations exploring a church partnership. Contact Stan Hastey for specifics.

2001

Oakhurst Baptist Church in Decatur, GA, has voted unanimously to invite the Alliance to celebrate our convocation in the year 2001 in Atlanta. Pastor Lanny Peters wrote: "We will have a new educational facility by then which will provide versatile meeting space which will be completely handi-capped-accessible. It would be an honor to host the 15th annual convocation if the Alliance Board should so choose." Board action on the invitation is expected in September.

Two Alliance members receive first BWiM awards

Kelly Bazemore, a student at Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond, and Tammy Lynn Condrey, a student at Gardner-Webb University School of Divinity, are among the first recipients of the Addie Davis Awards. The awards are presented by Baptist Women in Ministry recognizing outstanding female seminary students at Baptist seminaries, divinity schools, and houses of study.

Kelly is a member of the board of directors of the Alliance. Tammy Lynn is minister of youth at First Baptist Church, Taylorsville, NC.

In nominating Kelly Bazemore, professors Linda McKinnish

Bridges and William B. Rogers said, "She has a unique ability to write her ideas in a clear and creative manner, forcing classical thoughts into new forms of expression." Kelly works with young, African-American women in the inner city of Richmond through

the shared ministries of Pine Street Baptist Church, Hillside Baptist Center, and Oregon Hill Baptist Center. She is seeking a M.Div. at BTSR and plans to graduate this May.

Tammy Lynn Condrey is pursuing an M.Div. at Gardner-Webb. Nominated by professors Gerald L. Keown and Mary Alice Seals, Tammy Lynn is noted for her critical thinking skills as well as her sensitivity to the "importance of the enabling role as a major component of effective ministry."

"She has demonstrated a healthy understanding of the nature of ministry and is progressing steadily in developing her own ministry gifts," according to her professors.

Addie Davis, for whom the awards are named, was ordained in 1964 and served most of her ministry among American Baptist Churches. To honor her, BWiM receives an annual offering in her name for these awards.

**Kelly
Bazemore
Tammy Lynn
Condrey**

alliance calendar

• June 5-6: Atlantic Baptist Fellowship, Halifax, Nova Scotia.

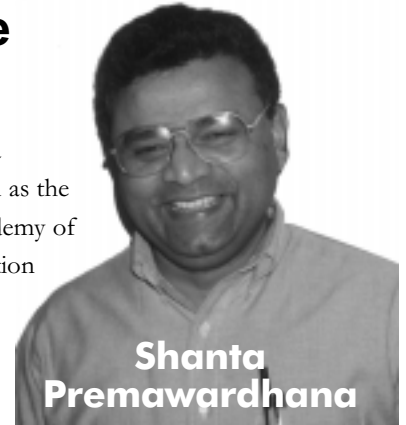
• June 25-27: CBF General Assembly, Houston, TX.

• June 30-July 3: Laudate: A Conference for Church Musicians. Samford University, Birmingham. Contact Milburn Price at (205) 870-2778 or smprice@samford.edu. Program leaders: Andre Thomas, choral conducting; Donald Hustad, worship, Rhonda Edge Buescher, church music education, Paul Richardson, hymnology; Bill Strickland, handbells, and Bob Burroughs, choral literature. Registration fee: \$100.

• June 29-July 3: Furman University Pastor's School, Greenville, SC. Stan Hastey will speak at the school on July 2 at 4:30 p.m. He will preach at First Baptist Church, Greenville, on Sunday, July 5.

Co-pastor of the year

• Alliance board member Shanta Premawardhana has been selected as the co-pastor of the year by the Academy of Parish Clergy, a national organization of professional clergy of all Christian denominations. Shanta has been pastor of Cornell Baptist Church in Chicago for



**Shanta
Premawardhana**

• eight years. He was recommended for the award by *Christian Ministry* magazine which will feature him in an upcoming issue.

• Shanta is a native of Sri Lanka who has lived in Chicago for 16 years. He studied at seminary in Sri Lanka and earned an M. A. degree in Buddhism and Ph. D. in Hindusim from Northwestern University. Shanta and his wife Dhilanthi have three children.

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Howard Roberts: "Tough Choices"

Howard W. Roberts, the immediate past vice president of the Alliance, has a new book just published by Smyth & Helwys, **Faith and Ethics: Tough Choices for the 21st Century**.

From his 30 years of pastoral ministry, Roberts knows that people struggle with and want help in addressing the ethical dilemmas of this time — death and dying, poverty, AIDS, racism, sexism, religious pluralism, peace, genetic engineering, and the right to die. **Faith and Ethics** discusses issues openly and provides thought-provoking questions and ways to help readers make informed, faithful decisions and take action.

Until this month, Roberts was the Senior Minister of First Baptist Church, Auburn, AL. He has just moved to Ravensworth Baptist Church in Annandale, VA. He is a graduate of Georgetown College, Southern and Southeastern seminaries. **Faith and Ethics** is his ninth book.

In our own country as well, we in the Alliance continue to be approached by other Baptists who seek our company and who have much to offer us. Within the larger fellowship of American Baptist Churches in the USA, two regional bodies are exploring formal affiliations with the Alliance.

One of them, the Rochester/Genesee Region in upper New York state, recently adopted a new strategic plan, the first goal of which is to “enhance and pursue strategic partnerships in mission.” Under that goal is an objective calling for the Region to “establish relationships of mutual support and enterprise” with other Baptist bodies that “share common views and interests.” Kenneth Williams, executive minister for the Region, wrote me to say, “We believe that the Alliance of Baptists is one of those bodies.”

Similarly, the executive committee of American Baptist Churches of Connecticut, through its executive minister, Lowell Fewster, has expressed an interest in beginning a conversation with the Alliance concerning the possibility of a partner relationship. In light of these preliminary expressions of interest in the Alliance, I’ve asked these two regional American Baptist executives to meet with our board of directors in September to begin exploring the possible dimensions of such relationships.

If what we Baptists in the South helped create between ourselves and other Baptists were chasms, what we built between ourselves and the larger church are great gulfs of separation. Yet in the early development of the Alliance, our founders stated explicitly that the new movement they were creating would be committed to “the larger body of Jesus Christ, expressed in various Christian traditions, and to a cooperation with believers everywhere in giving full expression to the gospel.” Most recently, this commitment to an active ecumenism has taken the form of an ongoing consultation with the United Church of Christ, a body represented in our convocation for a second time.

Twice already, members of the consultation team have met under the following working agreement, to be submitted for approval by the 1999 general synod of the UCC and next year’s Alliance convocation:

The Alliance of Baptists/United Church of Christ authorizes the establishment of a formal dialogue between the two bodies to determine the future relationship of the Alliance of Baptists and the United Church of Christ, and their ministers and congregations. This dialogue will explore the possibility of ministerial standing and congregational affiliation for members of

the Alliance in the UCC, and the future life and witness of the Alliance in relation to the UCC.

From my perspective, this new dialogue is a sign of grace to the Alliance. One of the historic churches has reached out to us. Theologically and ecclesiastically, we have much in common. So together we seek to discern what the Spirit is saying to the churches at a time when it is becoming ever clearer that the historic fissures between

denominations mean less and less.

As a further evidence of the seriousness of our intention to live out our commitment to the whole church, the Alliance board of directors has voted to explore formalizing our relationship with the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA.

What we are about in the Alliance of Baptists is what

God’s people throughout the ages always have been about. Like Habakkuk of old, we have heard the voice of the LORD say to us:

Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so that a runner may read it. For there is still a vision for the appointed time. If it seems to tarry, wait for it; it will surely come, it will not delay...

(Hab. 2:2-3)

If we are to be a significant part of God’s work in our time, it clearly will not be because of our own wisdom. For as the apostle reminds us, *it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.* (1 Cor. 1:19)

And then, this:

Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world ... so that no one might boast in the presence of God. (1 Cor.

1:26-29)

As to the state of God’s little flock known as the Alliance of Baptists, we have little to boast about. But we have much to give thanks for — most especially for the foolishness and power of the cross, beneath which we take our stand and find our abiding place.

perspectives



**By Stan Hastey
Executive Director**

(This is the second of two parts of excerpts from the “State-of-the-Alliance” address, delivered to the membership March 13.)

Operating Income
YTD: **\$85,254**
Budget Needs YTD:
\$77,210

↔

Frontiers of Hope
Mission Offering
Goal: \$75,000
Receipts: \$22,132

Oakhurst Recovery Program in Decatur, GA, and Emmaus House in Raleigh, NC, are mirror images of one another with the goal of helping homeless men get back on their feet.

Oakhurst has evolved from a night shelter to a treatment program to a recovery program since its inception at Oakhurst Baptist Church in 1981.

Today, 10-12 homeless men live at the center an average of 8-12 months free of charge. "That makes us unique because these days most insurance plans don't allow people to stay in a recovery program very long. But we have found that the longer they have to adapt, the better chance they have of a lasting recovery," said Mayo Funderburg, executive director.

About 60% of men who complete the Oakhurst recovery program remain free of alcohol or drugs for at least one year

Alliance dollars at work: Oakhurst • Emmaus House

after they graduate.

The Alliance's \$4,000 is used to buy food, which is the second largest single expenditure in the \$165,000 budget.

Other funding comes from congregations, corporations, foundations and individuals.

"The Alliance of Baptists has been vitally important to us because of its long-standing commitment," said Funderburg. "The Alliance has recog-

nized that we offer a service that is needed."

At Emmaus House, former resident Ron Collier now directs the program that currently

includes seven men. Its goal is to provide a supportive living environment for

working men in transition.

The Emmaus House ministry would like to expand to include a second house where men

can live even more independently before moving completely out on their own, but Collier said skyrocketing land prices in the area have prevented them from purchasing the additional space.

Emmaus House was begun in 1987 by Pullen Memorial Church and is now supported by more than two dozen churches in the Raleigh area.

The Alliance gift of \$3,000 helps maintain the house and pay for insurance. "We are a hand-to-mouth ministry," said Collier, "and without the Alliance's gift, some months the hand would not reach the mouth."

Oakhurst Recovery Program \$4,000
Emmaus House \$3,000



Shown in the photo at right are some of the youth from Pullen Memorial Church who provided dinner for the Emmaus House residents one evening recently. Randy Hall, youth minister at Pullen, is at right.



Emmaus House in Raleigh, NC.

