

connections

June 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.

CUBA — GRANT GIVEN TO BUILD CHURCHES

A grant of \$23,700 has been made to the Fraternity of Baptist Churches of Cuba by an anonymous U. S. foundation to help build new churches and fund a pastors' retirement program. The grant does require matching funds, which the Alliance has agreed to raise. More about this in *Perspectives*, page 3.



Alliance Founder Jim Strickland, pastor of Heritage Baptist Church, Cartersville, GA, baptizes one of five new members of the Iglesia Bautista Monte de los Olivos of Holguín, Cuba. The baptismal service, co-celebrated with Pastor Niubes Pernas, was held on a secluded beach about an hour's drive from the eastern Cuban city. These two congregations form one of 22 church partnerships jointly sponsored by the Alliance and the Fraternidad de Iglesias Bautistas de Cuba.

Mars Hill's

Paula Dempsey: Award for Caring

Paula Clayton Dempsey was one of two recipients of the first-ever G. McLeod Bryan Caring Awards, presented by Mars Hill College where Dempsey serves as campus minister. The award is named for a renowned civil rights leader and Mars Hill graduate.

Dempsey, a former member of the Alliance Board of Directors, was honored for her work promoting a medical ministry in Cuba, and for her involvement with Habitat for Humanity. She also helped organize "Dreams into Deeds," a campus effort which looks at ways faith, service and social justice intersect.

A NEW ALLIANCE CONGREGATION — FROM THE ABC

Bill Brosend is a third generation American Baptist whose church recently affiliated with the Alliance.

First Baptist Church in Rochester, NY, a congregation of more than 200, is a 175-year-old ABC church that became interested in the Alliance as the realignment of Baptist denominations has begun to take shape.

"The realignment of Baptist life in America is growing and the racial barriers that have historically separated us are collapsing," he said. "My hope is that the Alliance can



be one of our bridges to the future for what God has in mind for religious life in America. Historically our church has been a leader in American Baptist Churches and so we feel we are positioned to help nudge folks along that bridge."

Bill is a native of Columbus, OH. He earned a B.A. degree from Denison University in Granville, OH, M. Div. from Vanderbilt, and Ph. D. from the University of Chicago. In addition to being pastor, he also teaches New Testament and Homiletics at Colgate-Rochester Divinity School.

Alliance Founder and former President *Richard Groves* is editor of the newly re-released **A Short Declaration of the Mystery of Iniquity**, Thomas Helwys' classic work written in 1612. Helwys' plea for religious liberty, an autographed copy of which he sent to King James, landed the founder of English Baptists in prison, where he died. Groves also wrote an introduction to the new volume, just published by Smyth & Helwys.

Julie Price has been called as Associate Pastor by Central Baptist Church, Newnan GA. Formerly she served on the staff at Woodland Baptist Church, San Antonio, TX. Julie is a graduate of Candler School of Theology.

Chris Chapman is the new pastor at Knollwood Baptist Church, Winston-Salem, NC, beginning June 22. He comes from Ginter Park Baptist Church in Richmond. His wife Dana formerly served on the Alliance Board of Directors.

Joel Hawthorne is the new pastor at Montgomery Hills Baptist Church in Silver Spring, MD. He served the church earlier as Associate Pastor but most recently was pastor of First Baptist Church, Glens Falls, NY.

Mary Wrye is the new Minister to Singles at First Baptist Church in Greenville, SC. She was previously minister of education at Marion Baptist Church in Marion, VA. First Baptist has also ordained Gina McCarver to the ministry. She is associate in youth and activities.

Wake Forest University has hired the first three faculty members of its new divinity school, scheduled to open in the fall of 1999. The professors are renowned Hebrew scholar Phyllis Tribble, Baptist theologian Frank Tupper and church history and spirituality expert Father Samuel Weber, a Roman Catholic priest and

happenings



Three nurses and a physician, all members of Heritage Baptist Church, Cartersville, GA, were among a delegation of nine who visited medical installations in the provinces of Holguin and Ciego de Avila, Cuba, last month. They are shown here with Cuban colleagues during a visit to a hospital.

Benedictine monk. Bill J. Leonard is the school's dean.

Alliance member *O. Chappell Wilson Jr.* has accepted an appointment up to one year as chaplain and CPE supervisor at Methodist Medical Center in Memphis, TN. Wilson was formerly employed as ACPE supervisor of clinical pastoral education at the McFarland Institute in New Orleans. He retired in 1991 after 28 years as a mental health chaplain in Georgia.

Hal Shoemaker, father of former Alliance Board member Steve Shoemaker, died April 27 in Charlotte, NC, following a stroke.

Mary Amanda Speer, daughter of Pat and Bob Fulbright, died May 8 in Waynesville, NC. She was 29. Former Alliance President Nancy Hastings Sehested officiated at the memorial service. The Fulbrights may be contacted at their home address, 387 Liberty Rd., Waynesville, NC 28786. Pat Fulbright is a current director, Bob a former director, of the Alliance.

AB The Alliance of Baptists
1328 16th Street NW
Washington, DC, 20036

Executive Director: Stan Haste
Associate Director: Jeanette Holt
(202) 745-7609

Fax: (202) 745-0023

AllianceofBaptists@compuserve.com
www.AllianceofBaptists.org

Send information for newsletter to:
Sue Harper Poss

P.O. Box 25461, Greenville, SC 29616
Phone: (864)458-7503 Fax: (864) 458-9624
SuePoss@compuserve.com

pilot ministry project: strengthen discipleship

Jean B. Kim, executive director of the American Baptist Board of Educational Ministries, has announced a "pilot ministry project" with the Alliance, "aimed to help Baptist churches strengthen their discipleship ministries." Launched May 22, ServiceCenter is being piloted in Alliance congregations and four regions of American Baptist Churches USA. Project consultant Jeff Jones is using a computer database of resources for congregational ministries with all age levels. You may contact ServiceCenter by phone (1-800-ABC-3USA, ext. 2222); fax (610-768-2056); e-mail (jeff.jones@abc-usa.org); or regular mail (P.O. Box 851, Valley Forge, PA 19482-0851).

Two recent developments, both resulting from a recent trip to Cuba, indicate strongly the Alliance partnership with the *Fraternidad de Iglesias Bautistas de Cuba* soon may surge to a new level.

Thanks to a fact-finding mission to the provinces of *Holguín* and *Ciego de Avila* by a delegation of nine from *Heritage Baptist Church* in *Cartersville, GA*, we are exploring the prospects of taking in larger quantities of medicines and medical supplies. Among the nine Georgians on the mid-May trip were pediatrician *Richard Young*, nurses *Holly Bunch*, *Kaye Compton*, and *Sharon Mason*, and *Clay Crosson*, an executive with an Atlanta health care organization.

Heritage Pastor Jim Strickland, whose fertile mind and sensitive spirit have given birth to other Alliance initiatives — including our historic 1990 “*Call to Repentance*” for the sins of slavery and racism — conceived and organized the church’s medical mission trip. In earlier visits to *Heritage’s* sister congregation in *Holguín*, he had been profoundly moved by the poverty he witnessed, including a dearth of even the most common of medications and supplies.

What the medical team observed during its week-long trip last month was similarly moving. Since returning, the group has reviewed its findings and made the determination to try to do something that will make a difference in the hospitals and clinics visited.

Assured by their Cuban counterparts that any future donations of medicines and medical supplies may be targeted to specific installations, the *Heritage* representatives are exploring the prospect of sending a periodic planeload of the desperately needed supplies.

Special arrangements will have to be made with Cuban and U.S. officials, to be sure, but other religious and medical organizations long have been sending larger quantities of medicines and foodstuffs into Cuba with the blessing of both governments. So this is an idea

whose time might just have come.

On a second front, an anonymous foundation grant of \$23,700 has been handed over to the *Fraternidad*, with the condition the gift be matched by Sept. 1, 1999. Given the grim reality that *Fraternidad* congregations have virtually no potential for the foreseeable future to contribute significantly larger amounts to their mother body, the challenge of finding the matching funds falls squarely on the Alliance.

These must be new funds, meaning that the \$13,000 in our 1998 Mission Offering for the *Fraternidad* may not count against the \$23,700. Nor do we want this new fund-raising challenge to take anything away from the Mission Offering. Yet it is a challenge we must meet.

The bulk of these new funds has been designated by the donor foundation for the acquisition of sites for new churches and their buildings. A smaller portion of the grant will provide an initial investment pool for a retirement plan for pastors. *Fraternidad* leaders have determined these as two of their highest priorities.

A successful effort to raise the matching funds will take the Alliance/*Fraternidad* partnership to an exponentially higher level. The reason? With the current value of the U.S. dollar to the Cuban peso at roughly 20-1, the \$47,400 total will multiply itself many times over. Just as important, if we can match this first grant indications are others will follow.

One of the best features of Alliance life from the very beginning has been our ability to look upon challenges as opportunities. However seen, we have no shortage of either.

perspectives



By Stan Hasteley
Executive Director

alliance calendar

- June 25-27: CBF General Assembly, Houston.
- June 30-July 3: Laudate: A Conference for Church Musicians. Samford University, Birmingham.
- June 29-July 3: Furman University Pastor’s School, Greenville, SC. Stan Hasteley 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.
- August 3-8: Gathering of Baptists interested in spirituality. Mars Hill College, NC. (704) 689-1128.



You are invited to become a member of the Alliance of Baptists at any time. Annual membership dues are \$40, individuals; \$60, families; \$125, sustaining; and \$20, student/low income. You may complete and mail this form to the Alliance office at your convenience.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, St., Zip: _____

- \$40 Individual \$60 Family \$125 Sustaining \$20 Student/Low Income

Operating Income
YTD: **\$109,758**

Budget Needs YTD:
\$96,513

↔

Frontiers of Hope
Mission Offering
Goal: \$75,000
Receipts: \$31,140

Cross Creek Community Church in Dayton, OH, started with 12 members in 1995 and now offers three weekend services for a congregation of 140.

Dolores Street Baptist Church in San Francisco, a congregation of 40, is rebuilding an interfaith ministry from the ashes of fire and rejection by the Southern Baptist Convention.

San Leandro Community Church in San Leandro, CA, has a strong and vital community ministry even though membership is small.

All three receive help from the Alliance mission offering.

“We use the Alliance money for salary support,” said Mike Castle, one of four ministers at Cross Creek. “We are building something out of nothing and the Alliance money always seems to be there when we need it.”

Cross Creek, affiliated with the United Church of Christ, is an open and affirming congregation that uses a multiple staff concept. The four ministers — Castle, Sharon Temple, Keith

Alliance dollars at work: Cross Creek • Dolores Street • San Leandro

Haithcock, and Sue Boisard — have equal responsibilities. The church strives to be inclusive, uses creative worship styles, and stresses children’s programming. “We’re a church that takes seriously God’s call for justice, peace, equality and human dignity,” Castle said.

At Dolores Street, pastor Doug Donley is working to rebuild a church destroyed by fire in 1993, about the time it was disfellowshipped

The four ministers who share responsibilities at Cross Creek Community Church in Dayton, OH, are Keith Haithcock, Sharon Temple, Sue Boisard, and Mike Castle.

from the Southern Baptist Convention.

The “New Stone Project” is an effort to bring together

Jews, Christians, Buddhists, Hindus, and Muslims to build an interfaith center to

encourage peacemaking in a new way.

The goal is to break ground for this center within two years. The church currently meets in a storefront 10 blocks from the

burned ashes of its old building and the site of the hoped-for Interfaith Center.

The Alliance gift provides salary support. “The Alliance was the first to come to our aid,” said Donley, an ordained American Baptist minister from Cleveland, OH.

Dolores Street is not affiliated with a denomination, but does hold membership in the Alliance, the Baptist Peace Fellowship, and the Association of Welcoming and Affirming Baptists.

Five-year old San Leandro Community Church was voted out of its region of American Baptist Churches almost two years ago. Yet, it continues to work in the community through cooperative programs with a childcare center housed in its building, a women’s shelter, a food pantry, and a feeding program that turns no one away.

“Things look quite promising,” said pastor Kay Wellington.

The Alliance grant provides salary support.

Cross Creek	\$2,000
Dolores Street	\$1,000
San Leandro	\$3,000

