

2002 Convocation: April 5-7 • Winston-Salem

NEWSLETTER OF THE ALLIANCE OF BAPTISTS

connections

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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.

perspectives on Cuba: **The Time Has Come**

by Stan Hastey

More than at any previous time in the four decades since the United States first imposed a comprehensive economic embargo on Cuba, hopeful signs are pointing to the possibility of significant changes in U.S.-Cuba policy. As is often the case in international relations, these signs have as much to do with economic as with moral considerations.

Shortly before leaving last month for a three-week trip to Cuba, my 17th such visit over the past nine years, I was invited to participate in a meeting called by a four-year-old group called Americans for Humanitarian Trade with Cuba, a coalition that is pressuring the government for substantial changes in Cuba policy by bringing together leaders from the fields of business and commerce, agriculture,

medicine and religion.

Co-chaired by Sam M. Gibbons, a former member of Congress from Florida who at one time was chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, and Craig L. Fuller, former chief of staff for George H.W. Bush during the years the former president was vice president, this coalition is remarkable first and foremost because it is bipartisan.

Those of us who have tracked and sought changes in U.S./Cuba policy long have known that our cause will succeed only when Republicans and Democrats alike agitate for change. That is now happening, as is illustrated by the following members of the advisory council of Americans for Humanitarian Trade with Cuba:

• **Carla Anderson Hill**

Chairman & CEO, Hills & Co.

Former U.S. Trade Representative (under the first President Bush)

• **Lloyd M. Bentsen**

Former U.S. Senator, Texas

Former Treasury Secretary (under President Clinton)

• **Frank C. Carlucci**

Chairman, The Carlyle Group

Former chief of the National Security Council (under President Reagan)

• **Mark O. Hatfield**

Former U.S. Senator, R-Oregon

• **James R. Schlesinger**

Former Director of Central Intelligence (under President Nixon)

Former Secretary of Defense (under President Ford)

Other heavy hitters have joined the cause as well. These include Dwayne Andreas, chairman, Archer Daniels

(continued on page 3)

Fifteen representatives of four Alliance-affiliated congregations spent five days in Cuba in early March. They were led by Fraternity of Baptist Churches of Cuba Executive Secretary Manuel Delgado (second from right, front row) and Alliance Executive Director Stan Hastey. Three of the four participating churches were in Cuba to explore congregational partnerships. The four churches represented were Greenwood Forest Baptist, Cary NC; First Baptist, Taylorsville NC; Central Baptist, Newnan GA; and First Baptist, Washington DC.



The Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America has announced its 17th Annual Summer Conference (Peace Camp) will be held July 22-27 on the campus of Acadia University, Wolfville, Nova Scotia, under the theme, "To Sing Among the Peoples." Featured musician this year will be Michael Hawn of the Perkins School of Theology in Dallas. The preacher will be Barry Morrison of

Wolfville, while the Bible study leader will be Jerene Broadway of San Francisco. For details, visit www.bpfna.org or call 704/521-6051.

The Advent Spirituality Center at Mars Hill College, Mars Hill NC, invites participants to a prayer retreat May 30-June 2 at the High Pastures Retreat Center in Burnsville NC. This year's leaders, Lynda Poston-Smith of Fort Worth TX, and Lynn Bruner of Evanston IL, will direct participants in three days of "listening, sharing and creating as we enter the Kingdom of God in a childlike fashion." For registration and other information, please call Conference Coordinator Paula Clayton Dempsey at 828/689-1128 or send her a message at pdempsey@mhc.edu.

happenings



A group of eight students and three faculty members/administrators from Furman University in Greenville, SC, spent their Spring vacation in Cuba this year. Led by former Alliance President Ann Quattlebaum, coordinator of Furman's Center for Theological Exploration of Vocation, the group spent 10 days exploring Cuban religion and culture with the assistance of Alliance Executive Director Stan Haste. Quattlebaum, who since returning from Cuba has successfully defended her Ph.D. dissertation at the University of South Carolina, is shown with Assistant Dean Linda Bartlett (kneeling, front row) and Associate Dean David Bost (standing, top row right). Bost and Bartlett also teach in Furman's modern languages department.



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Four students from the Divinity School at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem NC, led by WFU Professor Candyce Leonard and Alliance Executive Director Stan Haste, spent 10 days in Cuba in March. The trip was the culmination of a semester-long, three-hour credit course in the culture and religion of the Caribbean island nation. The Wake Forest students are shown here on the steps of the chapel at the Seminario Evangélico de Teología in Matanzas, engaging fellow student Francisco Aguro in a lively conversation.

Retreats offer pastors a chance to worship, study

For Diane Hill, the series of two-day retreats every other month that she will begin in April will be like a series of mini-sabbaticals, a time to clarify her goals, and hold herself accountable for her ministry.

For Lee Gallman, the retreats will allow him to spend time in prayer and meditation without thinking about sermon preparation, and offer him the personal support of others who share the same ministry experiences.

Diane, the Minister with Children and their families at Watts Street Baptist Church in Durham for 10 years, and Lee, the pastor of Ginter Park Baptist Church in Richmond for 2½ years, will participate in a series of retreats led by

Mahan Siler and Nancy Osborne. Mahan is a founding member of the Alliance and retired pastor of Pullen Memorial Baptist Church in Raleigh. Nancy is the clinical pastor care supervisor at Rex Health Care in Raleigh and a member of Pullen.

Both Diane and Lee participated in a similar series of retreats that began two years ago.

"I found that the process of the group helped me with my ministry," Diane said. "It helped me to focus better, to clarify my goals, to see how I felt called to use my gifts, and to be intentional with following through. It was a way for me to hold myself accountable."

The groups of eight from various denominations will

participate in theological and church administrative study that includes lectures and case studies brought in by the participants. There will also be ample time for meditation and private study, as well as recreation. And worship will be primary. "These will be people who don't often get to participate in worship because they are always leading worship," Nancy said.

"This process gives people an opportunity for education, a time for attention to the actual doing of ministry, not separating the theoretical from the actual," Nancy said.

The upcoming series of retreats will be held every other month with e-mail communication in between. "One of our hopes is that if this works,

other people will find ways to hold similar group gatherings," Nancy said.

The retreats will be held over the next two years with funding provided by the Louisville Institute, a program of the Lilly Endowment. Each retreat will consist of eight bimonthly sessions that will run from Monday evenings through Wednesday afternoons. Group 1 will gather for sessions beginning April 8-10, 2002, and ending June 9-11, 2003. Group 2 begins Sept. 9-11, 2002, with its final session Jan. 5-7, 2004. For more information, call Mahan at 919/494-2733 or send him a message at JAHAN222@aol.com.

"It should be a powerful time for us," Lee said.

The time has come to win the battle to ease the embargo

(continued from page 1)
Midland Co.; Julius B. Richmond, M.D., professor of health policy, Harvard Medical School, and former U.S. Surgeon General; David Rockefeller, chairman, Rockefeller Center Properties, Inc., Trust; General John J. Sheehan (retired), former Supreme Allied commander, Atlantic (NATO); Sargent Shriver, chairman of the board, Special Olympics International; and Paul A. Volcker, former chairman, Federal Reserve Board.

To date, the coalition's most significant achievement came two years ago, when it successfully lobbied Congress to pass the Trade Sanctions Reform Act legalizing some sales of food and medicine to Cuba. Yet as AHTC Executive Director Lissa

Weinmann has noted: "Despite the progress made, much remains to be done before humanitarian trade with Cuba is a reality. Continued restrictions on private financing and the onerous, multitiered process of licensing must be abolished if normal humanitarian trade is to be achieved. Experience also shows that lifting restrictions on travel to Cuba is a necessary element in humanitarian trade."

As part of this emerging coalition, I

intend to ask the Alliance of Baptists to join AHTC in urging President Bush and

Congress to lift all restrictions on the sale of agricultural products and medicines to Cuba and to lift the ban on travel to Cuba. These are the next steps on the journey to the normalization of relations with our Caribbean neighbor.

As former Congressman Gibbons put it recently, "Never in the history of the United States has there been

such a cruel embargo on such a small country." But, he added, "We're going to win this battle."

perspectives



By Stan Hasteley
Executive Director



Individuals are invited to become members of the Alliance at any time. Annual membership dues are \$40, Individuals; \$60, families; \$125, sustaining; and \$20, students/low income.

2002 Operating Budget

Through February 28

Needs: \$48,750

Receipts: \$46,174

2002 Mission Offering:

Goal: \$95,000

Receipts: \$23,921

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In 2002, for the second year, the Alliance has made a gift of \$5,000 from its Mission Offering to The International Center of Bethlehem to support a summer school program that tries to offset the influence of violence by encouraging creativity and critical thinking in children six to 16.

The summer school program includes activities such as biblical storytelling, printing, collage, music, theater, dance, communications, and sports, all designed to help with the children's cognitive and social development.

The 2002 summer school has three aims, said Mitri Raheb, General Director of the International Center.

1. To provide an alternative for children during their summer vacation, to help them to overcome their traumas, and to give them the space and care needed for healing and spiritual growth.

2. To educate children about their environment, how they fit in to the community, and to encourage them to take a proactive role in their society for a better future.

3. To enhance the children's creative abilities and equip them with skills such as

Recent violence at school in Bethlehem underscores need for Alliance help

teamwork that will enable them to understand and contribute to the future of Palestine.

Raheb hopes that 225 children will be served this summer.

"Children in Palestine in general are suffering," he said.

"They are traumatized. They need healing of their souls, their minds and their bodies. They are in great need for

programs to nurture their spirits and to help them make the best creative and productive use of their summer vacation."

As an example of the violence the children on the West Bank see, in mid-March, the Dar al-Kalima School in Bethlehem was damaged. Raheb visited the school and found broken windows, destroyed doors, damaged telephone lines, and various interior damage to the building including bullet holes.

"We are worried about the reaction of

our children," Raheb said. "What will this do to the values of non-violence which we have been trying to instill in them? We will continue to teach our children never to accept injustice and to work diligently toward building a better future for the coming generations of Palestine."

Raheb has suggested that those concerned do the following:

1. Ask your government to support sending International Peacekeeping forces to Palestine to protect the civilians from the military hostility.
2. Write letters to newspapers and television stations demanding accurate reporting of what is happening in the area.
3. Find a school in your community that would be interested in writing to the children of the Dar al-Kalima School. They can send these letters to the following e-mail address: wordsofcomfort@annadwa.org.

To read the Alliance statement of Christian-Jewish relations, visit our website, allianceofbaptists.org.



Brief news from Morocco

ANOTHER MISSION OFFERING RECIPIENT

Alliance member **Karen Thomas Smith**, chaplain to Christian students and others on the campus of Al Akhawayn University in Ifrane, Morocco, sent the following e-mail message Feb. 19: "We have a great celebration to share with you all. The governor of Ifrane has approved our request for the former church building to be given to Al Akhawayn University as a Christian worship center and retreat/dialogue center... Thank you for your prayers and join with us in praising God for this wonderful opportunity opening to us!" The Alliance Mission Offering will provide \$2,000 for Karen's work in Morocco.