

connections

February 2003

Volume 6 Issue 2

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.

alliance
financesFINAL
REPORT
2002

Through December 31, 2002

2002 Operating Budget

Needs: \$292,531
Receipts: \$295,072

2002 Mission Offering

Goal: \$ 95,000
Receipts: \$ 95,307

Thanks be to God!**Alliance members come through at year-end to make 2002 a successful year financially***by Stan Hastey*

You will see by looking at the figures in the box to the left the good news that we surpassed both our operating budget and Mission Offering goals for 2002. You are to be commended, especially for above-and-beyond gifts that poured into the Alliance office during November and December, making them the best months ever for receipts.

You responded magnificently to an urgent appeal Craig Henry and I made when it became evident we were facing significant shortfalls in operating funds and gifts to the Mission Offering.

Craig and I, quite honestly, have been overwhelmed. As Jeanette Holt has put it

more than once during recent weeks, "It is truly humbling to see the level of commitment these gifts represent."

One of my favorite short sayings is from the late Dag Hammarskjöld, the Swedish statesman and secretary general of the United Nations. A committed Christian and winner of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1969, he died in a car crash that same year. Sometime before his death, he declared: "For all that has been, 'Thanks!' For all that is yet to be, 'Yes!'"

Based on your amazing response to urgent needs, I sense that to be the spirit of Alliance people at the beginning of a new year filled with opportunities. Thanks be to God — and to you!

"I GREATLY APPRECIATE OUR MEMBERS COMING THROUGH FOR US. THIS IS JUST ONE MORE EXAMPLE OF THE STRONG SUPPORT THAT THE ALLIANCE OF BAPTISTS ENJOYS."

— PRESIDENT CRAIG HENRY

2003 MISSION OFFERING

While we are celebrating the success of the 2002 Mission Offering, we must not rest too long for we have another challenging goal to meet in 2003.

The Missions Committee set, and the Board of Directors approved, a goal of \$111,000 for this year's offering. You will see included with this newsletter a brochure detailing the recipients of the 2003 Bridges of Hope Mission Offering.

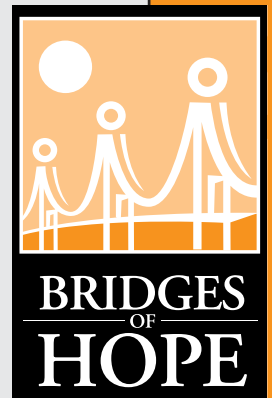
You will notice that some of the goal has not been allocated, leaving us with a cushion of funds to consider unexpected needs that come to our attention during the year.

Twenty-eight organizations whose purposes

are consistent with those of the Alliance Covenant and Mission Statement are already approved to receive a total \$104,000 — if the funds come in.

Some of the recipients are new, like **ADVOCATES FOR BLIND CHILDREN INTERNATIONAL**, while others, like **EMMAUS HOUSE** in Raleigh, NC, are long-time recipients of our gifts. Most of the gifts, while small, make a vital difference to these organizations in whether they can continue to operate effectively.

As this year begins, will you pledge to make your gift now to the 2003 Bridges of Hope Offering?





A PASTOR IN THE “SUN” — This photograph of John Laney, the interim pastor at Woodbrook Baptist Church in Baltimore, appeared in an early January Sunday edition of the *Baltimore Sun* in a story about “Best Pictures of 2002.” John Roberts retired in April 2001 after serving as pastor of Woodbrook for 40 years. “I think the photograph shows a superb Alliance interim pastor ministering in his off hours,” John said. “I could not be more enthusiastic about him as my pastor and friend. I have proposed that we make him Interim Pastor Emeritus.”

Mary Wilson, Scott Stearman are called to Alliance congregations

Mary Wilson is the new pastor of the Alliance-affiliated **Church of the Savior** in Cedar Park TX, an Austin suburb. The longtime lay leader in Highland Park Baptist Church, also in Austin, assumed the bivocational position last November. She is also a full-time mathematics professor at Austin Community College, where she has taught for 15 years. She is a 2001 graduate of Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, where she earned the degree of master of arts of theological studies.

Scott Stearman was called Jan. 12 as pastor of the Alliance-affiliated **Kirkwood Baptist Church** in St. Louis, where he

will begin his new ministry March 2. Since 1995 he has been pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church in Paris, France. He also

has served churches in Athens, Greece, New York City, and Carney and Guthrie, OK. Former Alliance Vice President **Betty McGary**, and an early president of Southern Baptist Women in Ministry (now Baptist Women in Ministry), died early in the new year following a lengthy and debilitating illness. She suffered from multiple sclerosis. A funeral service was held Jan. 8 in Louisville KY. In more recent years a resident of Houston, she had been in Louisville for

happenings

Christmas with her parents before returning to Texas. The McGary family lost their only other child, a son, last November.

Bill Leonard, Dean of the Wake Forest Divinity School, will present the Thomas E. Stricklin Lectures in Church History at Northminster Church in Monroe, LA, at 9:30 a.m. on Saturday, Feb. 22 and at 10:45 a.m. on Sunday, February 23. Leonard’s topics are “Being Church in a Pluralistic Society” and “Doing Mission in a Pluralistic World.”

“Our church is honored to host Bill Leonard, one of the foremost experts on American religion, at this critical moment in our national history,” said

Welton Gaddy, Northminster’s pastor and a former president of the Alliance. “We look forward to his insights on how we maintain the distinctives of our faith in a context filled with many faiths.”

Second Baptist Church, Liberty, MO, seeks a minister of music. The minister of music will lead this diverse congregation in preparation for, understanding of, and practice of Christian worship through music and music education. At least 5-7 years of church music experience is preferred. Send resumes and referrals by March 1 to Minister of Music Search Committee, Second Baptist Church, 309 East Franklin, Liberty, MO 64068.



April 24-26 at Vienna Baptist Church in Vienna, VA

An Alliance Convocation **CHOIR**

Larry Schultz, minister of music at Pullen Memorial Baptist Church and music director for the upcoming Vienna Convocation, announces creation of an Alliance Convocation Choir to lead worship and present Song of Wisdom from “Old Turtle” by Joseph Martin.

“As the proclamation for worship on Friday evening (April 25),” Schultz wrote, “this unique work for choir, story reader and orchestra will speak meaningfully to the convocation theme as it presents

Douglas Wood’s magnificent story, “Old Turtle.”

The Convocation Choir will gather at Vienna Baptist Church for rehearsals on Thursday, April 24, from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m., and on Friday, April 25, 3:00-5:00 p.m. Individuals interested in participating should contact Larry by e-mail (lschultz@pullen.org) or telephone (919/828-0897, ext. 219) to get a list of the music that will be performed. The list is also on the Alliance website, as is general information about the Convocation.

Convocation Housing: Courtyard by Marriott, Tysons Corner, 1960-A Chain Bridge Road, McLean, VA. 703/790-0207. Group Name: Alliance of Baptists

Questions of war at forefront of public policy

At the beginning of the new year, the most important questions being asked on the public policy front have to do with Iraq. “Will we go to war?” “Is President Bush determined to bring down Saddam Hussein?” These are but two among many such questions. Of some comfort during the agonizing weeks and months leading to the present moment is the fact that within the Bush administration itself, a serious debate over those questions has been going on.

You deserve to know that in my capacity as your staff leader, I have signed on to two documents urging the president not to go to war. Last September I joined other church leaders, under the auspices of the National Council of the Churches of Christ, in a letter to Mr. Bush that read in part:

“We, leaders of American churches and church-related organizations, are alarmed by recent statements by yourself and others in the Administration about preemptive military action against Iraq for the expressed purpose of toppling the regime of Saddam Hussein. Understanding that Mr. Hussein poses a threat to his neighbors and to his own people, we nevertheless believe it is wrong, as well as detrimental to U.S. interests, to take such action.

“We oppose on moral grounds the United States taking further military action against Iraq now. The Iraqi people have already suffered enough through more than two decades of war and severe economic sanctions. Military action against the government of Saddam Hussein and its aftermath could result in a large number of civilians being killed or wounded, as well as increasing the suffering

of multitudes of innocent people.”

In October, I joined an even broader-based group, led by Sojourners founder Jim Wallis, in urging both President Bush and British Prime Minister Tony Blair not to prosecute war in Iraq. In that letter, point by point, Wallis and the rest of us who signed the letter made a strong case that the projected military against against Saddam Hussein falls far short of the “just war” arguments employed by the Christian church since the days of St. Augustine. We also wrote:

“As the calls for military action against Iraq continue from our two governments ... we are compelled by the prophetic vision of peace to speak a word of caution to our governments and our people. We represent a diversity of Christian communities — from the just war traditions to the pacifist tradition. As leaders of these communities in the United States and the United Kingdom, it is our considered judgment that a preemptive war against Iraq, particularly in the current situation, would not be justified. Yet we believe Iraq must be disarmed of weapons of mass destruction and that alternative courses to war should be diligently pursued.”

Whether you would have signed either or both of these letters, I am grateful for the freedom the Alliance has given me to do so under the dictates of my conscience. And whether you agree with the positions expressed in those letters, I have every confidence you are doing what is even more compelling to all Christians, namely, to pray for peace.

God bless your year — and our nation’s.

perspectives



By Stan Haste
Executive Director

What’s our future?

Group to begin working on strategic plan

President Craig Henry has named a seven-person Strategic Planning Work Group to develop a strategic plan to guide the Alliance over the next few years.

Those named, subsequently approved by the executive committee, are Willard Bass, Winston-Salem NC; Jerene Broadway, Asheville NC; Chris Copeland, Decatur GA; Welton Gaddy, Washington DC and Monroe LA; Ann Quattlebaum, Greenville SC; and Henry.

Guiding the strategic planning process will be Daniel Pryfogle of Signal Hill, which describes itself as a “mission-driven”

consulting firm. Based in Raleigh NC, Pryfogle is an American Baptist who recently moved east from Oakland CA, where he was a lay leader in Lakeshore Avenue Baptist Church. Pryfogle and two associates will lead the work group during a retreat scheduled for Feb. 14-16 in Atlanta, to begin the strategic planning process.

It is anticipated that the process will be completed during 2003, hopefully in time for the Alliance’s board of directors to adopt the plan at its September meeting, Henry said. As developed the plan should provide direction to the Alliance for the next three to five years.

“In undertaking this study of our current performance and future capacity, we recognize the need for strategic planning and spiritual discernment guided by professionals from outside the Alliance itself,” Henry said. “Based on its performance in assisting other Baptist organizations in similar processes, we are confident that Signal Hill is the best group available to help us.”

Funds for the process, estimated to cost \$20,000-\$25,000, are being raised off-budget. As this issue of *connections* went to press, \$9,000 in special gifts from individuals already had been received, with another \$1,200 pledged. You are invited to contribute. Please designate your gift to “Strategic Planning Process.”

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Valuing our Future: The Act to Leave No Child Behind

Imagine an America where no child is hungry or poor, where every child can grow up in affordable housing in a safe, secure and supportive community. Where every child and every parent has access to affordable health insurance and good health care. Imagine an America where children are free from fear of violence both outside and inside their homes and where every child receives the education needed to prepare him or her for college and career.

This is the dream of the Children's Defense Fund (CDF), a national organization advocating for the rights of children and their families since 1973. The Mission to Leave No Child Behind was introduced in 2000 calling all Americans to a commitment to give every child "a healthy start, a head start, a fair start, a safe start and a moral start."

As a centerpiece of this mission, the Act

to Leave No Child Behind (S.940/H.R.1990) has been introduced in both houses of Congress. According to the CDF, this Act would give Congress and the president the opportunity to:

- Get every child ready for school through full funding of quality Head Start, child care, and preschool programs.
- Ensure health insurance for all children and their parents.
- Lift every child from poverty — half by 2004; all by 2010.
- End child hunger through the expansion of food

PURSUING JUSTICE

By Beverly Rodgers

Beverly is a member of the Alliance's Peace and Justice Committee. From Houston, she is a member of Covenant Church, and is Director of Volunteer Services at American Hospice there.

programs. • Make sure every child can read by fourth grade and can graduate from school able to succeed at work and in life. • Provide every child safe, quality after-school and summer programs so children can learn, serve, work, and stay out of trouble.

Also to: • Ensure every child a place called home and decent affordable housing.

• Protect all children from neglect, abuse, and violence and ensure them the care they need. • Ensure families leaving welfare the supports needed to be successful in the workplace, including health care, childcare, and transportation.

For more information on the Act and what you can do to get involved, contact the Children's Defense Fund, 25 E Street NW, Washington, DC 20001, (202) 628-8787, cdinfo@childrensdefense.org, or visit the website at www.childrensdefense.org.

RECENT ALLIANCE AFFILIATIONS

The Office of the Chaplaincy of the University of Richmond has officially affiliated with the Alliance. Longtime university chaplain David D. Burhans and associate chaplain Robert G. Moore III hosted a meeting with Alliance Executive Director Stan Hastey last fall to discuss the prospect of such an affiliation. Toward year's end, Burhans and Moore notified the Alliance of the decision and made an initial contribution of \$500. This represents the first time for such an institutional affiliation.

Hope Community Fellowship of Lebanon KY is the most recent church to affiliate with the Alliance. Peggy W. Birmingham, a 1988 graduate of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, is the new congregation's first pastor. She has been ordained into the ministry of the United Church of Christ and received a second ordination in 2000 from the Alliance-affiliated Heritage Baptist Church, Cartersville GA.