

connections

September 1999

Volume 2 Issue 9

Our Mission is to make the worship of God primary in all our gatherings, foster relationships within and outside the Alliance, create places of refuge and renewal for those wounded or ignored by the church, side with the poor, pursue justice with and for the oppressed, care for the earth, work for peace, honor wisdom and lifelong learning, and hold ourselves accountable for equity, collegiality and diversity.

Four teachers' houses are now wired for electricity thanks to the work of an 11-member team just back from a trip to the Baptist Theological Seminary in Gweru, Zimbabwe.

"Through our work, we strengthened the relationships and ties between the Baptist Convention of Zimbabwe and the Alliance of Baptists," said group leader Bonnie Dixon of Cary, NC, a staff member at Millbrook Baptist Church in Raleigh. "Our work affirmed our stance to facilitate indigenous ministries with no strings attached. We also discussed future strategies for partnering and future mission endeavors, including an on-going effort to assist the Convention in supporting its home missionaries."

Said one pastor from Zimbabwe's capital of Harare: "The Alliance has done in three years what no other missionary group has done in 45 years — helped our convention become self-sustaining."

Beyond these intangible outcomes, the 11 volunteers also accomplished

Zimbabwe: "The Alliance has done in three years what no other missionary group has done in 45 years..."

several concrete tasks. They:

- Renovated the men's dormitory by plastering the interior, rebuilding bathrooms, replacing roof beams, repairing tin roofing, installing additional electrical outlets for student lighting, and replacing existing lighting.
- Facilitated a pastors' school for 65 pastors and students from the Baptist Convention of Zimbabwe by providing funds for transportation, room and board; and providing texts and materials for participants. Some of the volunteers led sessions on preaching and pastoral care and preached in worship sessions each night of the pastors' school.
- Left materials and funds for labor for

WHO WENT: PAGE 3

A new grove of mango trees and possibly a dairy farm may be developed in Zimbabwe because of the gifts of 300 youth attending Unidiversity camp in Brevard, NC, in July.

Alliance member Bonnie Dixon talked to the youth about the needs of the Baptist Theological Seminary in Gweru and they responded by giving \$1958 during their week of camp.

The money was designated to buy mango trees for the new orchard. But it was more than needed for just trees so seminary officials will use the remainder to buy two cows, the start of what they hope will be a productive dairy that would provide milk for babies, jobs for students, and income for the seminary from the sale of milk and possibly other dairy products.

Adam Dixon under one of the mango trees bought with funds from Unidiversity.

Doctoral student Tracy Hartman taught preaching.



completion of the administration building at Zororo Primary School, including shelving for the library, concrete for flooring, plastering for walls, and bars and locks for windows and doors.

- Left many miscellaneous items: Men's suits for the student pastors; cloth and sewing supplies for sewing classes for seminary wives; personal supplies like soap and shampoo for student families at the seminary; books and school supplies for students at Zororo Primary School; communion plates for the seminary and three churches; bandages, glasses, Neosporin, and 250 pairs of prescription eyeglasses (individually labeled with prescriptions) for Baptist Hospital at Sanyati; sheets and towels for the Zimbabwe Baptist Convention guest house; books and Bibles for the seminary library; and two suitcases of shoes.

Host churches involved were the Monomotapa Baptist Church and Seminary Baptist Church in Gweru and Emmanuel Baptist Church in Harare.

Mango Trees and Milk Cows



Stephen W. Lucas has been called as pastor of Alliance-affiliated Highland Park Baptist Church in Austin, TX. Since 1996 he has been pastor of Trinity United Church of Christ, Concord, NC. Earlier he was pastor of Longwood Hills Baptist Church, Orlando, FL, during a time that congregation became affiliated with the United Church of Christ. It was Steve who first suggested that the UCC and Alliance enter into dialogue.

happenings

New Alliance member *Joann Juett* is now associate pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Washington, DC. The Indiana native, an American Baptist, previously taught English and drama in Social Circle, GA, where she also was minister of performing arts at Social Circle United Methodist Church.

Mark Stauffer is the new pastor of Alliance-affiliated Luther Rice Memorial Baptist Church in Silver Spring, MD. An American Baptist, Mark is a graduate of Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary and comes to the national capital area from the pastoral team of First Baptist Church, Norristown, PA.

Former Alliance board member *H. Stephen Shoemaker* has accepted the call of Alliance-affiliated Myers Park Baptist Church, Charlotte, NC, to become its fifth senior minister. The Statesville, NC, native spent much of his youth in



Helping prepare pastor search committees to conduct effective searches is a part of the services offered by the Alliance. On Aug. 15, associate director Jeanette Holt met with members of the senior pastor search committee at First Baptist Church Greenville, SC. She is shown with committee chair Jim Neal. The Alliance also maintains a placement file.

Charlotte. He is a graduate of Stetson University, Union Theological Seminary in New York and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Among Steve's previous pastorates are Broadway Baptist Church, Fort Worth, TX, and Crescent Hill Baptist Church, Louisville, KY.

Virginia Alliance President *Donna Hopkins Britt* has been called as interim senior pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, Roanoke, VA. She is a graduate of Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond.

Alliance member *Kim Buchanan* was ordained to the gospel ministry July 17 by Alliance-affiliated Virginia-Highland Baptist Church in Atlanta. She is a Ph.D. candidate in education and preaching at Emory University and earned her M.Div. at Southern seminary. Kim is also adjunct faculty member and teaching assistant in Christian education and preaching at Candler School of Theology.

Alliance board member *Kathy Manis Findley* of Little Rock, AR, has been

named Coordinator of Survivor Services of Family Service Agency. In this position, she supervises personnel and programming for the Agency's Sexual Assault Center, the Rape Prevention Program, the Domestic Violence Outreach Program, and the Victim Services Program, all based in the Little Rock Police Department. Kathy is also pastor of Providence Baptist Church, a recipient of Alliance mission offering funds.

Alliance member *Tommy Bratton* is now Minister of Education and Family Ministries at First Baptist Church in Gastonia, NC. He formerly was at First Baptist Church in Belton, SC.

Bread for the World, a Silver Spring, MD-based hunger advocacy organization, is seeking a Director of Church Relations to succeed Joel Underwood. Send nominations or applications to Human Resources, Bread for the World Inc., 1100 Wayne Avenue, Suite 1000; Silver Spring MD 20910. Fax: 301/608-2401. E-mail: human.resources@bread.org.

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

Executive Director: Stan Hastey
 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

The Board of Directors of the Alliance will meet Sept. 16-18 in Washington.

Much of the violence that plagues the land we tend to rationalize as random acts. To do so insulates us against the hard questions of why. We seem largely inured to the arguments of sociologists and psychologists and other analysts of our gun-toting society.

Twenty-eight states now permit virtually anyone to carry a concealed weapon. The National Rifle Association, in its grotesque misreading of the Second Amendment to the Constitution, lobbies state legislatures to ensure the “right” to pack heat. Lest they be caught in the NRA line of fire, lawmakers meekly submit to its demands.

There is another kind of violence, however, and it is not random. Its perpetrators are professional haters, people such as the brothers Matthew and James Tyler Williams, who in July allegedly killed a gay couple in northern California and are prime suspects in three arson fires of synagogues.

The Williams brothers have been linked to the Christian Identity movement and something called the World Church of the Creator. Although the latter calls itself a church, its adherents reject the idea of God or of gods. But they all hate gays and Jews, as did

Adolph Hitler.

Scarcely a month later, Buford Furrow walked into a Jewish community center in Los Angeles and opened fire, felling a 68-year-old receptionist, a second woman and three children aged 5 and 6. A neo-Nazi who has worked for the white supremacist group Aryan Nations, Furrow turned himself in and confessed.

Furrow and the Williams brothers are but three examples of a rising phenomenon of frightful proportions in the United States. Because they cloak their hatred in false religion, it is time for true religion to respond. That is precisely what the Fellowship of Reconciliation and The Interfaith Alliance are doing.

Supported by the Alliance of Baptists and scores of other religious groups, FOR and TIA are convoking “interfaith vigils against hate violence” on October 7. As Alliance President and TIA Executive Director Welton Gaddy puts it:

“These vigils are a call for people of faith to act as nonviolent agents of healing in their communities; a call for people of faith to stand up to hate violence directed at persons due to their race, religion, sexual orientation, nationality, gender or disability; and a call for people of faith to join together on October 7, 1999, as a united voice against hate violence.”

This is something we can and must do.

perspectives



By Stan Hasteley
Executive Director

SAN LEANDRO EXPULSION PUT ON HOLD

San Leandro Community Church in San Francisco, CA, a recipient of Alliance mission offering funds, is one of four American Baptist churches whose expulsion over homosexuality from the ABC has been put on hold pending an appeal of the ruling. Six American Baptist regions have requested “adjudication” of a June 21 decision by the denomination’s General Board to deny appeals of San Leandro and three other California churches that were removed from their region over their “welcoming and affirming” stance toward gays. Adjudication is a formal process for resolving differences between cooperating parties in the 1.5-million-member American Baptist Churches, USA.

ZIMBABWE: OUR VOLUNTEERS

The Dixons: Bonnie, John and Adam, 12, of Cary, NC. Bonnie is an Alliance board member and on the staff of Millbrook Baptist Church in Raleigh.

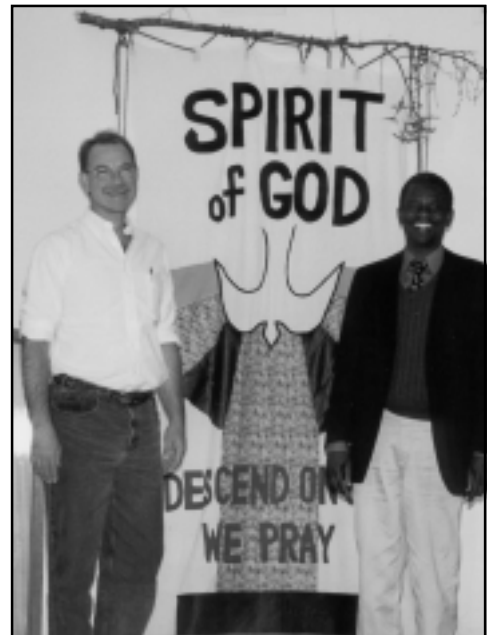
The Hartmans: Tracy, Jay, Jana, 12, and Jonathan, 10, of Northminster Baptist Church in Richmond, VA. Tracy, a Ph. D. candidate at Union Theological Seminary, taught preaching at the pastors’ school. She is a graduate of the Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond and did her mission immersion in Zimbabwe. Jay is also a BTSR graduate, now a general contractor. Jana turned 12 while in Zimbabwe and threw a birthday party for all the seminary kids.

Alice Loyd: Member of Pullen Memorial Baptist Church in Raleigh, a retired teacher and writer.

Nancy Jones: Member of Pullen, a paralegal.

Furman Hewitt: Director of the Baptist House of Studies at Duke University, who taught Pastoral Care at the pastors’ school.

John Neves: Member at Pullen, who is an administrator for an architectural firm, a musician and artist.



John Neves, member of Pullen Memorial Baptist Church in Raleigh, designed this worship banner for the Baptist Convention of Zimbabwe, which he presented to John Mazvigadza, Executive Secretary of the convention.

Operating Budget YTD:

Needs: \$157,092
Receipts: \$162,289

Mission Offering YTD:

Goal: \$80,000
Receipts: \$30,907

Cuba Grant:

Challenge: \$23,700
Receipts: \$22,012

For the first time in 1999, the Alliance of Baptists allocated \$3,000 from its mission offering to make funds available for seminary students to attend A Gathering of Baptists and Others Interested in Spirituality held at Mars Hill College in North Carolina. Fourteen students were able to attend July 25-31. Here are some of their comments:



These are some of the students and convenors of the gathering. Tom Turner, one of the coordinators, is second from left on the first row.

I am a doctoral student in spirituality at Catholic University in Washington, DC, and it encourages my heart more than I can express to see this fervor for spiritual formation among Baptists. I have sometimes felt a certain loneliness maintaining my identity in the Free Church tradition at Catholic U. I was also excited to see the diversity of students who attended ... Thank you for the practical as well as spiritual support that the scholarships provided.
— *Stephanie Ford*

As a full-time pastor and full-time student, I would like to thank you for a week of stillness, silence, reflection and renewal. Your scholarship enabled me to immerse myself in substantive learning and unhurried openness to the Holy Spirit.—
Joy Heaton, Enfield, NC, Campbell Divinity School

This was one of the most remarkable and renewing experiences of my seminary career. I learned much from the workshops that I can take directly into my ministry to share with others. So many more people than myself will benefit from your generosity.—
Nicki Royall, Williamsburg, VA, BTR

As a student and part-time Associate Campus Minister at Mars Hill College, I find that my usual routine during the academic year is hectic and there is little time for quiet moments devoted to deepening and strengthening the interior life. The Gathering provided a check on the busy-ness of life and encouraged balance

in all of life — something that all of us, and especially students preparing for vocational ministry — need to learn. What a wonderful experience it was for me! — *Becky Horner, Mars Hill, NC, White School of Divinity, Gardner-Webb University*

The retreat provided a wonderful jump-start for my personal spirituality... You really blessed all of us with your gifts.—
Karin Allen, Richmond, VA

Among the retreat leaders were Donna Scott, an Episcopal priest and pastoral counselor in Nashville, TN; Lynda Poston Smith, a musician from Fort Worth; and Sam Weber, a Benedictine monk and priest who is professor of spiritual formation at Wake Forest Divinity School in Winston-Salem, NC.