

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.

What happened: School for the Blind in Sarajevo

The school is the only agency meeting the needs of blind and vision-impaired children and young adults in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

It was closed for several years due to extensive damage caused by the war in the former Yugoslavia. All of the school's teaching material, including essential Braille books and supplies, were lost or destroyed

The few teachers who were able to work visited the local blind children in their homes, continuing their education as best they could. Inevitably, however, the children's education suffered, especially those living outside the Sarajevo area.

The school is in the process of rehabilitating itself. When fully reconstructed and refurbished, it will reopen with up to 350 blind and partially-sighted children and young people (some of whom will be boarders as the school serves all of Bosnia-Herzegovina). There are also plans for rehabilitation and training projects to help people blinded by war injuries adapt to their disability.

ABCI staff and volunteers have been in e-mail and letter contact with school personnel. The most pressing needs determined by ABCI are continued education, health care concerns, and recreational needs of the children

Blinded children of war

Alliance missions partner can see their needs

War in Bosnia-Herzegovina has meant that educational and other needs of blind children in that country have suffered in the past decade. Alliance Mission Offering funds are being used this year to help fight the problem, if only from a distance.

Advocates for Blind Children International (ABCI) is receiving \$1,000 through the Bridges of Hope offering to fund the distribution of a newsletter to increase this organization's visibility, and hopefully thereby to raise awareness of the needs of the blind in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

ABCI is the brainchild of Steven Foreman, a member of United Christian Church in Austin, TX — an ecumenical partnership congregation of the United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Steven had recognized the need several years ago through media reports and spent two years traveling in the Balkans, working with blind children whose sense of place was devastated by the war and with other children who were newly blinded by the war.

During his nearly two years in the field, Steven received financial support from individuals, from churches, and from a grant from the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). He also used most of his personal savings. He gave money to blind persons for food. He helped the School for the Blind in Sarajevo partially rebuild its building. He taught blind children how to maneuver the

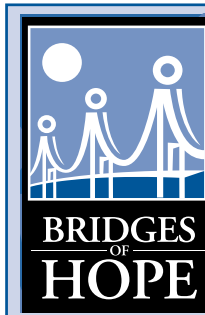
newly-mangled streets of their hometown. He worked with UN relief personnel to obtain medical assistance for vision-impaired persons. When he returned to the States, he organized Advocates for Blind Children International.

"ABCI hopes to meet the needs of the School for the Blind in Sarajevo and other blind and vision-impaired persons and institutions around the world, as possible, by raising a fund of money from which these needs can be met," Foreman said. "To raise that money ABCI needs to increase its visibility."

The newsletter is one way to do that. Our funding is also helping to pay for the infrastructure costs (phone bill, postage, etc.) involved with making connections with blind and vision-impaired persons around the world who are in need of assistance.

"The Alliance of Baptists shares with ABCI the desire to reach the marginalized and forgotten people of our world," Foreman said. "To many Americans, the war in Bosnia is ancient history, long forgotten. The Alliance and ABCI seem to have a common desire for memory."

"We also see a connection with the Alliance because its covenantal principle of servant leadership is exemplified in the work of ABCI's devotion to blind children, who can give very little in return; because the Alliance's covenantal principle of social justice is lived out in the work of ABCI needs-meeting goals; and because the Alliance is like us, existentially aware, on-the-edge, grass roots-oriented, willing to try new things, and hopeful."



Advocates for Blind Children International is receiving \$1,000.

Scholl called to Ravensworth; Ammons to Pullen

Lia Scholl has received a unanimous call from the Alliance-affiliated Ravensworth Baptist Church, Annandale, VA, as its new minister of congregational development. Currently on staff at another Alliance congregation, Southside Baptist Church, Birmingham, AL, Lia is to begin her new ministry in September.

Brian Ammons is the new minister with youth and college students at Pullen Memorial Baptist Church, Raleigh, NC. Already a Pullen member, Brian served the church as a summer intern three years ago, working on social justice projects. The Wake Forest University Divinity School graduate also has worked at Pullen in several volunteer positions.

David Waugh, pastor of the Alliance-affiliated Metro Baptist Church, New York City, will be recognized Oct. 5 during a tenth anniversary celebration. David recently completed two terms on the Alliance Board of Directors and continues to represent the Alliance on the Executive Board of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA.

Alliance member **Sharon Snow** of Winston-Salem, NC, has accepted a chaplaincy at the Regional Cancer Center at Forsyth Hospital, where she begins Sept. 1. She will continue to work as well in the rare

happenings

Some Alliance members in North Carolina call for moratorium on the death penalty

Several Alliance members in North Carolina are among those calling for a two-year moratorium on the death penalty in that state. They and others have signed a letter sent to Governor Michael Easley and Speakers of the House Jim Black and Richard Morgan urging the suspension of executions so that the General Assembly can study the state's capital punishment system.

Jack McKinney and Nancy Petty, pastors of Pullen Memorial Baptist Church in Raleigh; James Pike, senior pastor, and Robert Seymour, pastor emeritus, of Olin T. Binkley Baptist Church in Chapel Hill; and Mel Williams from Watts Street Baptist Church in Durham signed the letter. Another prominent church leader who signed is William H. Willimon, Dean of the Chapel and Professor of Christian Ministry at Duke University.

Leaders from the North Carolina Council of Churches, the North Carolina Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; the Southern Conference of the United Church of Christ; the Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina, the United Methodist Church; and the Roman Catholic Diocese of Raleigh also signed.

books section of the Z. Smith Reynolds Library at Wake Forest University. Sharon is a member of Wake Forest Baptist Church, which ordained her to the ministry five years ago.

The late **William C. Treadwell Jr.**, who along with his spouse Lu were early leaders of the Alliance, was honored during baccalaureate ceremonies at Baylor University's Truett Theological Seminary in June. Their son, William Treadwell III, rector of St. Peter's Episcopal Church in McKinney, TX, presented the inaugural William Charles Treadwell Jr. Award for Excellence in Christian Education and Leadership to Truett graduating senior Michael Warren McEntyre of Knoxville, TN.

Recently word was received of the death in May of **William C. Link Jr.**, pastor emeritus of the Alliance-affiliated **Second Baptist Church, Liberty, MO**. An outspoken early leader in the Alliance, he served as a member of the Board of Directors. His widow, **Virginia**, may be contacted at 2201 S. Lemay, Apt. 157, Fort Collins CO 89525-5100 (telephone 970/482-1853).

Alliance-affiliated **Glendale Baptist Church, Nashville, TN**, which describes itself as "a caring community of equality and grace," has engaged in what it is calling "the discernment phase" of a search for a new pastor. Visit www.glendalebaptist.org/pastoral_search for more information.

alliance finances

Through July 31

2003 Operating Budget

Needs: \$ 175,091
Receipts: \$ 156,305

2003 Mission Offering

Goal: \$ 111,000
Receipts: \$ 44,369

What's all the talk about?

Come to the Alliance website and find out.

We have ongoing discussions about the strategic planning process started by the planning work group and another discussion on slavery reparations started by the Peace and Justice Committee. Join in one of these, and see what's new. Or start your own discussion. Just go to

www.allianceofbaptists.org and click on **Discussions**. See you there!

— Beverly Rodgers, Peace and Justice Committee



Debate over nominees has become ugly

By tradition, the nine justices who comprise the Supreme Court of the United States stay out of the public spotlight except when rendering decisions that garner the attention of most citizens. Sadly, this is rare, save at the end of the high court's term in June of each year. Certainly the court emerged from the shadows this past June when it partially upheld affirmative action plans at the University of Michigan and invalidated Texas' anti-sodomy law.

From my perspective, the court was right in both cases. In the sodomy case, known as *Lawrence v. Texas*, the Alliance of Baptists joined 28 other religious bodies in urging the court to strike down the Lone Star state's broadly written statute criminalizing consensual same-sex relations as a fundamental violation of human rights. Six of the nine justices agreed with our position.

In the paragraph of the friend-of-the-court brief explaining the Alliance's interest, we wrote, "The Alliance of Baptists recognizes the unjust treatment of same-sex oriented persons by the church and society, and encourages individuals and churches to accept, in response to the biblical mandate for justice, the call to witness ... the civil rights and equality of opportunity for persons of same-sex orientation, and to oppose the humiliation and violence done to them." This language came directly from the Alliance's ground-breaking 1995 document for dialogue and study developed by our Task Force on Human Sexuality.

Taken together, the decisions of the high court in the affirmative action and sodomy cases have been praised and celebrated by some, condemned and lamented by others. In the latter group is the Christian Coalition's Pat Robertson, whose response was to launch what he called a "prayer offensive" to persuade the Supreme Court's oldest and most infirm justices to retire.

"One justice is 83 years old, another has cancer and another has a heart condition," Robertson wrote in an e-mail message to his supporters. "Would it not be possible for God to put it in the minds of these three judges that the time has come to retire? With their retirement and the appointment of conservative judges, a massive change in federal jurisprudence can take place."

About the last point, Robertson is absolutely correct. If and when President Bush has the opportunity to nominate justices to

the Supreme Court, we can anticipate that he will emulate his father, who nominated Justice Clarence Thomas, and President Reagan, who gave the nation Justice Antonin Scalia. The two youngest members of the court, Scalia and Thomas are generally hostile to the claims of individual rights under the Constitution. Although they call themselves strict constructionists, their record on the court shows them to be radically activist judges who are eager to overturn any number of precedents they deem outside the pale. They are, to put the matter plainly, intemperate judges who would undo court precedents.

For his part, President Bush has given conclusive evidence of his intention to nominate similarly intemperate judges to the federal bench at the district and appellate levels. At this moment, the nine Democrats on the 19-member Senate Judiciary Committee charged under the Constitution with examining federal judicial nominees have put a hold on three of the president's nominees to circuit courts of appeals — Miguel Estrada, Priscilla Owen and William H. Pryor Jr. They are considering doing the same with a fourth, Carolyn Kuhl.

Article II. of the Constitution specifies that among the powers of the president is that of nominating, "by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate," members of the Supreme Court and all other federal judges. Yet several Republicans on the Judiciary Committee, including Chairman Orrin G. Hatch, are assailing their Democratic colleagues for doing nothing more than fulfilling their constitutional mandate, and this with respect to a minimal number of judicial nominees as compared with those blocked by the same Republicans during President Clinton's term of office.

Furthermore, some of the Republicans on the Judiciary Committee are condemning their Democratic colleagues for objecting to the injection of religion into the debate, and this in plain disregard of the provision in Article VI. of the Constitution that "no religious Test shall ever be required as a Qualification to any Office or public Trust under the United States."

That the debate over a mere handful of the president's judicial nominees has become ugly is evident for all who care to see. In this case, however, the fault lies squarely with the president and his party, not with a loyal opposition carrying out its constitutional mandate.

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. You may use the enclosed envelope to send in your dues. Just be sure to indicate that the funds are for annual dues.

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MONEY MATTERS

Bookkeeper may ‘prevent problems before they arise’

Carol Ferris hopes that in her role as bookkeeper, she will be able to help the Alliance more efficiently manage its finances and help board members and others better understand where funds are coming from and being spent.

The owner of Ferris Place Associates, Carol was hired on a contract basis as the Alliance’s bookkeeper earlier this year. Her work frees up Associate Director Jeanette Holt to spend more time on Alliance programming and placement.

As she becomes more familiar with the Alliance, Ferris hopes to be able to suggest ways in which we might save money, as well as ways in which we might be able to generate additional income.

“If nothing else, I hope that I will be able to provide the Alliance board and its members with more knowledge about the finances of the organization,” she said.

“Carol Ferris is a welcome addition to the team,” said Holt. “The care and

professionalism she brings to the task of handling the day-to-day financial management and reporting are great assets to the Alliance and will certainly allow me to devote more time and energy to the programmatic tasks of the Alliance like Convocation planning, helping the committees of the Board of Directors, and the ongoing work of placement.”

Ferris and her husband Ronald are members of Fairfax Baptist Church in Northern Virginia, where she is church treasurer. They are parents of two adult children, Cynthia and Bryan.



CPA D.H. Scarborough

Carol relates to independent Alliance auditor D. H. Scarborough, a founding partner of Johnson and Scarborough, CPAs, who has audited the Alliance’s records since the office was moved to Washington in 1989.

A member of an Episcopal church in Fairfax County, VA, Scarborough is no stranger to working for religious organizations. She has audited the records of the



Bookkeeper Carol Ferris

Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs for many years. “When I learned about the Alliance, I was impressed with what you believe in,” she said.

“I think this is a good step for the Alliance to have a bookkeeper,” Scarborough said. “As the Alliance grows and gets bigger, you are getting more exposure. Carol knows about the proper procedures that need to be followed, and she can help prevent problems before they arise.”

The chair of the Alliance Board’s Budget and Development Committee David Gooch said, “Carol’s joining the Alliance staff marks another step in strengthening the group’s stewardship of resources entrusted to us by members, affiliate churches and other donors.”

“Her work not only enhances our financial capabilities but also increases staff capacity to do more central programmatic tasks for the Alliance,” he said.