



JUNE 2007

## State churches looking for clergy:

The reference and referral service offered by SC/CBF helps churches in South Carolina find the right pastor or staff member. Here are some current (late May) openings :

- Augusta Heights, Greenville: Pastor
- Cedar Springs, Spartanburg: Pastor
- Fernwood, Spartanburg: Pastor
- First Baptist, Aiken: Minister of Education, Minister of Youth
- First Baptist, Blackville: Pastor
- First Baptist, Clemson: Pastor
- First Baptist, Clinton: Minister of Discipleship and Outreach
- First Baptist, Conway: Minister of Spiritual Formation or Education Specialist
- First Baptist Greenwood: Minister of Youth
- First Baptist, Inman: Minister of Youth and Young Adults
- First Baptist, Loris: Pastor
- First Baptist, Mauldin: Pastor
- First Baptist Orangeburg: Pastor, Minister of Education, Minister of Youth
- First Baptist, Pendleton: Interim Senior Adult Minister
- Heath Springs: Pastor
- Lakeview Baptist, Camden: Youth Minister
- Parisview, Greenville: Pastor
- Rivelon, Orangeburg: Pastor
- Sans Souci, Greenville: Pastor
- Swift Creek, Hartsville: Pastor
- The Baptist Church of Beaufort: Children's Minister

## Ministry of introduction connects church with pastor

# Making the match leads to fulfilling the call in Walterboro

Even though he was happy where he was, Randy Gardner didn't ignore the signs that God might be calling him to another place of service. So, he turned to the reference and referral services of SC/CBF to help him discern where that place might be.

Randy had been pastor at First Baptist Church in York for six years when two new opportunities came his way, neither of which turned out to be right. "But since they had come to me back to back, I wondered if there might be something going on that I needed to look at," he said. "I contacted Terry Brooks, our former reference and referral associate, and went through the scenario. I told him that, while I was satisfied at York, I also wondered if I might need to be open to other possibilities. I told him that if there were churches that he felt I would match, he could pass my name along."

"Every time I have considered a move during my 33 years in ministry, the situation has been different," Randy said. "The one consistent factor is the result of advice I received when I was still a student at Gardner Webb: when God opens a door I had better look at it. If an opportunity presents itself, I follow through with whatever process is in place."

"Over a period of months, I received some contacts, with two churches showing some interest. And, as the interest from these churches seemed to be winding down, Sara and I were fairly relaxed, somewhat relieved that we were going to be staying right where we were."

"That's when Terry mentioned Walterboro to me," Randy said. "For a variety of family reasons, my first response was that I wasn't ready to move that far from the upstate, but if a door opens..."

"So, Terry passed my resume along and things began to move very quickly. I met with the search committee and within six months, Sara and I were on our way to Walterboro.

"We've been here a bit over a year now and I firmly believe that I am in God's will," he

said. "When it comes to the idea of a spiritual calling, I still have my old roots and I believe very strongly that God does lead a minister and a congregation together. I think the somewhat convoluted path my process took was necessary for Sara and me to be open to the possibility of this move. If I had not gone through the other processes, I doubt that I would have even considered this move. Now we both believe that we are exactly where we're supposed to be.

Fortunately, the folks here at Walterboro seem to feel the same way.

"I think God uses a variety of means to bring people together for ministry," Randy said. "The formal process is just an introduction. The search committee and the minister have to do their work and be open to God's leading and, hopefully, they find that their decision process merges with God's will and forms a shared sense of call."

"Whether there is only one person that is right for a given church at a given time, I don't really know," he said. "I know that FBC, York, was exactly the right church for me at the point in my life when I went there. And I believe that being at FBC, Walterboro, is the right place for me right now."



**Randy Gardner, pastor of First Baptist Church in Walterboro: At the right place**

## Moderator's Message

# My own struggles gave me passion for the disenfranchised

Being the baby in a family of six, we were poor as church mice but didn't know it. I was reared in a Christian home with two Godly parents who had us in church every time the doors were open, walking to and fro three miles each way. My father was a cotton farmer and he lived from season-to-season just trying to keep clothes on our backs and food on the table. I have vivid memories of times when my father would head to the mill to have wheat and oats ground into flour and corn meal and my mother saying: "Now, Coan, here's a sack; be sure you come back with one just like it so I can make a dress for one of the girls." At the end of the cotton season, my father would pay his bills. If there was any money left, the child who needed it the most would get a new pair of shoes for school; if not, we'd wear the same pair another year.

I majored in business education in high school so I could get a job as a secretary after graduation, NEVER dreaming of anything else. Being number two in my graduating class (just one-tenth of a point behind the valedictorian), I won a scholarship to college. My guidance counselor asked me where I wanted to go and I didn't even know what she was talking about. None of my siblings had gone to college. Thus my parents said "no" when asked if I could go. They felt it was unfair, and there was no money for such anyway, so why discuss it.

But when asked by the guidance counselor what they thought, my siblings were excited and said "YEA...someone from our family is going to college!" Someone believed in me and encouraged me! The way I was reared and the unfailing belief of those who had faith in me have made me what I am today. I owe everything to them.

When I was a senior in high school, I chose as my motto for the yearbook this quote: "There is a destiny that makes us

*brothers, no one goes his way alone; all that we send into the lives of others comes back into our own."* Little did I know the impact these words would have on my life as I matured.

Where do I see SC Cooperative Baptist Fellowship at the present, and where do I see us going in the future? Presently, we are a strong fellowship of like-minded believers whose purpose and vision is to assist churches and individuals in discovering and fulfilling their God-given mission. It is not our job to dictate what that mission is — ours is simply to aid folks in discerning what it is for them individually and within the context of their local churches. We're doing a good job of that, but we have not yet tapped our ability to do it with excellence. My prayer for this year is that each individual connected to SC/CBF will maximize his or her potential to fulfill God's purpose in our lives and then let that spill over into our involvement in our local churches. If we can each achieve this goal, we're opening the door for God to do wonderful works of ministry in and through us.

I do believe that "all we send into the lives of others comes back into our own." Being a part of an organization which champions the marginalized, the poverty stricken, the poor and disadvantaged, the abused and disenfranchised, we have an awesome responsibility to put into action our desire to be the presence of Christ in our world. My prayer is to see God at work in each of us, fulfilling the desires of our hearts as we minister in

practical ways to these less fortunate. We will be the ones receiving the blessing.

Melvin Lukenbach said: "A good exercise for the heart is to bend down and pick someone up." Let's do it! Let's put our hands to the plow and not look back.



**Helen Phillips was elected moderator of SC/CBF at the General Assembly in Clemson April 27: "I believe my upbringing and my struggles have contributed greatly to my passion for the disenfranchised of this world. That passion carried me through 34 wonderful years of teaching with the belief that if I could help just one to realize he or she was worth something and that anything is possible, then I would have achieved all and more than I ever dreamed or hoped of achieving."**

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## HELEN G. PHILLIPS, 2007-08 Moderator, SC/CBF

The youngest of six children, Helen was born and reared in Pauline where she grew up in Philadelphia Baptist Church and became a Christian. She earned a B.A. degree from Limestone College, an M.A. from Winthrop College, and an Education Specialist II degree from USC. A retired educator, Helen taught school for 34 years, all in Cherokee County. She recently retired for the second time from Merchants Distributors Inc. of Hickory, NC. She and her husband Jim traveled seven southeastern states serving hundreds of retail grocery stores. Helen and Jim have been married for 30 years. They live in Gaffney, are parents to two sons and two grandchildren. They are members of Fernwood Baptist Church in Spartanburg where both are heavily engaged in its ministries.

# Ministry of Introduction

Coordinator's Column



By Marion Aldridge  
Coordinator

SC/CBF works on behalf of churches to find the right staff members. Look for reference and referral resources at [www.cbfofsc.org](http://www.cbfofsc.org).

Leader Connect-CBF is a résumé-matching service developed by the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. You can access it at [www.thefellowship.info/leaderconnect](http://www.thefellowship.info/leaderconnect). From that same page, you can access resources that may be of help to search committees.

I love introducing my friends to one another—so that they can become friends! Away from CBF, many of my friends know each other, and we love spending time together. If you want to meet some good people, hang out with my friends for a while. They are the best!

The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship has thousands of fantastic folks as well. Part of my job is to get these folks together. I love it! Terry Brooks capably handled the **Ministry of Introduction** within CBF of SC for many years, helping churches find pastors and ministerial staff, and helping clergy find the right church. A pastor or a staff search is not a quick and easy project. When you try to help the right person end up in the right place at the right time doing the right job, you are traveling on Holy Ground.

There is no more important time in the life of a church, and no more important act, than the attempt to discern the Spirit of God in finding the right person to serve with your congregation. Amazingly, some committees and some churches want to rush through the process. Some want to do it on the cheap. Too often, committees and churches seem to have no idea that the ecclesiastical and denominational landscape has changed enormously in the past few decades.

- Terry and I have worked with 20th century churches who wanted to remain in the last century, but who wanted to bring in a young 21st century pastor to lead them and help them to grow.

- Terry and I have worked with churches that were naïve and/or dishonest not only with their prospective staff, but with themselves,

clueless and in denial about the realities of their setting and their real needs as opposed to their fantasies.

- Terry and I have worked with congregations which have never given CBF a penny, and probably never will, who wanted a CBF-type Baptist.

- Terry and I have worked with congregations which were lazy and/or impatient.

- Terry and I have worked with committees that were ruled by a minority with an agenda.

You can order brochures from the CBF of SC office about *10 Mistake Church Search Committees Make Way Too Often*. You can also download this document from the home page of our web site, [www.cbfofsc.org](http://www.cbfofsc.org).

At the same time, we have worked with clergy who were not always on their best behavior. They represented themselves theologically to be what they are not—just to get a job!

This **Ministry of Introduction** can be challenging, but there is Joy in Heaven (and in our office) when we get it right. National CBF and three other congenial Baptist bodies have created a fantastic tool to help with this task of Reference and Referral. It is called LeaderConnect. It is easy to find at [www.thefellowship.info/leaderconnect](http://www.thefellowship.info/leaderconnect).

LeaderConnect will help both clergy and churches to ask and answer the right questions as they move forward in this holy endeavor. In addition to this “high tech” option, we will always have, in Baptist life, the “high touch” option as well. Please call me if you or your church needs assistance in this Ministry of Introduction. I would be glad to tell you about some of my friends you might want to meet.

**C**onnie McNeill, the Fellowship's coordinator of administration, led the SC/CBF Coordinating Council in a retreat and planning session May 12-13. Using the theme of “The Discipline of Getting Things Done,” she led the group of 35 to talk about leadership within SC/CBF that would then transfer into leadership within local congregations. The council was encouraged to do “worshipful work,” seeing committee/team work as an act of worship, and having a vision always in the forefront — with the discipline of executing to fulfill that vision.



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**THE 2007-08 OFFICERS** for SC/CBF were installed at the General Assembly April 27 at First Baptist Church in Clemson. They are, from left, Jeff Hayes, secretary, First Baptist Church Blackville; Helen Phillips, moderator, Fernwood Baptist Church Spartanburg; Wayne Patterson, treasurer, First Baptist Church Pendleton; Macon Sheppard, past moderator, Providence Baptist Church Charleston; and Tony Hopkins, moderator-elect, First Baptist Church Greenwood.

## Associate coordinator sought

The search has begun for an Associate Coordinator for Congregational Life for the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of South Carolina. A job description is posted on the website. Send resumes via email attachments to [congregationallife@cbfofsc.org](mailto:congregationallife@cbfofsc.org) or mail to Search Committee, CBF of South Carolina, Box 11159, Columbia, SC 29211. Interviews will begin around Aug. 1.

## South Carolina meeting at national General Assembly

June 28 • Washington, DC

If you're coming to CBF's national General Assembly, plan to be a part of the South Carolina meeting on June 28 at 3:45 p.m. (Consult your printed program for the location.)

Speaking briefly at that session will be Nell and Butch Green, CBF field personnel on assignment in South and North Carolina; Jenee Angel, working in Belgium; Ginger Barfield, Baptist Studies director at Lutheran Seminary; Beverly Greer, missions coordinator; Marion Black and Jerry Kerns, disaster response coordinators; Bill Stanfield and Evelyn Oliveria, SC/CBF urban ministers at Metanoia; and Oti Bonachu, pastor in Bucharest, Romania, on the new Ruth School that was dedicated in October.