

FELLOWSHIP



MARCH 2007

Former Fernwood pastor Randy Wright now offering hospitality at a **Snail's Pace**

A life-time of preparation has equipped Randy Wright, pastor of Fernwood Baptist Church in Spartanburg for 24 years, for his new job as Executive Director of The Snail's Pace, a Christian ministry of hospitality and retreat in Saluda, NC.

Why the move? "The short and accurate answer is that God has called me to this new ministry," he said. "I started retreating at The Snail's Pace in September 2002, and joined the Board of Directors in 2005. Since

that time, I became increasingly aware of some needs of The Snail's Pace, and I later felt that I could contribute more to its ministry and future as a staff

member."

"In December 2005 I began imagining or fantasizing what it would be like to live and work at The Snail's Pace. These inner stirrings developed into a call that I confirmed in August of 2006."

"The timing has proved to be God's timing, which is always good," he said. "Both The Snail's Pace and Fernwood Baptist Church are at a place in their histories where new leadership is needed."

In his new position, Randy will work in the areas of development and fund-raising, the ministry of Christian hospitality and spiritual direction, and facilities and grounds maintenance and upkeep.

"I have come to believe that everything in my past has equipped me for where I am and what I am doing at the present," Randy said. "My mother taught me to cook, sew, clean house, and wash and iron my clothes. When I was at Clemson University, I worked in the dining hall for four years. When I was in seminary, I worked part-time as a custodian. All this has prepared me for the multiple roles at The Snail's Pace.

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Randy's story

Randy Wright grew up in a Navy family and had many early experiences living in various places. He earned a degree in English from Clemson University and master of divinity and doctor of min-

istry degrees from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Later he completed advanced clinical pastoral education, and the first five years of ministry he served as chaplain at the former Lynwood Treatment Center in Louisville, KY, a residential treatment center for adolescent offenders.

From 1977-84, he was pastor at Trinity Baptist Church in Seneca before moving to Fernwood Baptist in Spartanburg,

where he served until the end of 2006. He was exchange pastor at Ascot Baptist Church in Ascot, England, during the summer of 1980, and has taught twice at the Gypsy Smith School in Bucharest, Romania. In the summer of 2006 he taught at the Institute of Theology at Princeton Theological Seminary.

Randy is married to Diana Ott Wright. They are parents to three children: Kristi, mother of two with another due in July; Traci, expecting identical twins in August; and Ryan.

A fourth degree black belt, Randy is a master in the Korean martial art of Tang Soo Do. He also enjoys guitar playing and bicycle riding. He completed the Assault on Mt. Mitchell 102-mile bicycle ride in May 2006.

In July he turns 60.

2007 Assembly

When: April 27-28

Where: First Baptist Church, Clemson

Theme: Building Relationships Around the Table

Speakers:

Friday Lunch: Spotlight on South Carolina: *FBC's ministry to students at Clemson.*

Friday Missions Banquet: *CBF Global Missions Coordinator Rob Nash.*

General Assembly Keynote Speaker: *CBF former moderator Joy Yee.*

Host Hotel: Ramada Inn and Conference Center, U.S. Highway 123 & 76. 864-654-7501. Deadline for reservations is April 13.

REGISTER NOW!

www.cbfofsc.org



60th birthday



By Marion Aldridge
Coordinator

"When I was a child, I spoke like a child, thought and reasoned like a child. But, when I grew up, I put away childish habits." — St. Paul

"Victory is not won in miles, but in inches. Win a little now, hold your ground, and later win a little more."
— Louis L'Amour

"Success is the result of making many mistakes and learning from experience." —Winston Churchill

What a wonderful ride it has been—so far! People tell me that age 60 is the new 40, and I'm glad since I turned 60 on February 11. Once upon a time, I thought 60 was old.

Birthdays with a 0 in them are a time for evaluation and assessment, and I have done my share of that as I approached this milestone. Here is a bit of what I think I have maybe learned, on my good days:

1. God is still alive and active on Planet Earth.
2. When we want to know something about God, we ought to look at and listen to Jesus.
3. God loves us and is for us, not against us!
4. We get to love God back.
5. We are supposed to love others as we love ourselves.
6. Listening is better than talking.
7. Let the Lovee help define what love is to them.
8. We all fail in big ways sooner or later.
9. God's grace had better be the last word, or we are all in trouble. (The law is good, but not good enough.)
10. We are part of a community. We are connected.
11. Hard work and rest (Sabbath) are both important.
12. Perspective of time and space (distance) is needed. Detach. Your town and your opinion are not at the center of the world. It's not all about you or me.
13. Life is a school where we learn how to trust God.
14. Do not be afraid. Don't be anxious. Don't worry.
15. I am responsible for my life. Whining, blaming, and being defensive solve nothing.
16. I must be open to Change. The only person I can change is me.
17. Growing old is fairly easy. Spiritual and emotional growth is hard work.

"God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and wisdom to know the difference." —Reinhold Niebuhr

Evangelism, end to poverty key goals of Christian Churches Together

SC/CBF Coordinator Marion Aldridge and South Carolina Christian Action Council director Brenda Kneece participated in the February meeting of a group called Christian Churches Together (CCT). Also participating was Daniel Vestal, coordinator of CBF nationally.

The meeting resulted in a consensus on the importance of evangelism and the need to eliminate domestic poverty.

The CCT is composed of 36 churches and national organizations from virtually all U.S. Christian groups who have been seeking to come together for fellowship, worship and opportunities to share in important ministries.

Christian Churches Together began in 2001 out of a deeply felt need to broaden and expand fellowship, unity, and witness among the diverse current expressions of Christian faith. Over the past five years, with a focus on praying together and building relationships, CCT has become the broadest most inclusive fellowship of Christian churches and traditions in the USA, including Evangelical/Pentecostal, Orthodox, Catholic, historic Protestant and Racial/Ethnic churches among its participants.

More than 150 people attended the meeting.

Go to our website to read the statement on poverty.

nizations from virtually all U.S. Christian groups who have been seeking to come together for fellowship, worship and opportunities to share in important ministries.

The Snail's Pace can accommodate up to 20 people overnight, double occupancy. Suggested fees are: \$5 breakfast only; \$10 lunch only; \$20 one day only, including lunch; \$60 weeknight per person, includes meals; \$70 Friday or Saturday overnight, includes meals. No guest is turned away because of inability to pay. <http://thesnailspace.org/> • 828-749-3851

The Snail's Pace —

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I cook, clean, and wash dishes when necessary. I lead staff. I do minor carpentry and repairs."

Beyond those skills, Randy said 34 years of ordained ministry also contributes to his call and role now, as does a 20-month course of study called *Sursum Corda* (Latin for "lift up your heart") he completed in 2003 which prepared him to offer spiritual direction.

"From my own experience in the ministry and from observation and study, I believe that personal care of the soul is essential to sustain a religious vocation...or for that matter to live and grow as a Christian," Randy said. "I feel called to offer the remainder of my active ministry promoting and providing such intentional attention to one's spiritual condition an relationship with God."

SC/CBF

SCHOLARSHIP
recipients
for Spring
2007

BTSR.....

Martha Ann
Callahan,
Spartanburg
Mary Carol
Anderson,
Greenville
Casey Callahan,
Travelers Rest
Lauren Deer,
Beaufort

**McAfee School of
Theology**.....

Clayton Davis,
Pendleton
Allison Hicks,
Aiken
Cody Joshua
Sanders, Duncan

**Lutheran
Theological
Southern Seminary**.....

Kelly Dickerson,
Columbia
Tricia Kilgore,
Columbia
Bridget W.
Kokolis,
Columbia

**Wake Forest
School of Divinity**..

Greg Dover,
Greenville

**Ersine Theological
Seminary**.....

Tim W. Evatt,
Pendleton

**Gardner Webb's
Christopher White
School of Divinity**..

Sherry Steadman,
Boiling Springs

Scholarship meant Sherry Steadman could finish her seminary studies

Sherry Steadman expects to graduate this spring from Gardner-Webb's School of Divinity thanks in part to scholarship funds she received from SC/CBF.

From Richmond, VA, she now lives in Boiling Springs, SC. While studying at Gardner-Webb, she is interning at Southside Baptist Church in Spartanburg.

"My husband and I are both working on degrees and trying to raise a family," she said. "Scholarships or loans were our only options for me to receive the ministry preparation I needed."

"It means a great deal that an organization will recognize and support me in my call to ministry without dictating what it is they want me to do," she said. "It's an enormous encouragement to be accepted by a group who supports women in ministry."

"When I think of long term goals, I don't have a position in mind — I want to follow God's leadership on my life in whatever venue

that takes me," Sherry said. "As far as specifics, though, I have several ideas for children's curriculum and discipleship training material, and would like to try my hand at writing."

Sherry earned her B. A. degree in sacred music at Gardner-Webb in May 2001 and returned there for her M.Div. "It was the only reputable

school within driving distance that offered the program I wanted. It's not a very exciting reason to attend a school, but I wouldn't trade my experiences here for an

Ivy League degree. I haven't just 'learned' at the Divinity School. I've been taken on a journey, and I have grown."

Sherry grew up in a Christian home and has been active in ministry and leadership from her early teens. "I have always enjoyed working with children and have had many great opportunities to do so," she said.

Sherry and her husband Dan have a three-year-old son, Michael, who she says, "teaches me more about my faith every day."

Scholarship recipients

Dickerson's Baptist roots in South Carolina run deep

By Kelly Dickerson

I made the intentional choice to study at Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary. I audited a course at LTSS in the fall of 2003 while working full-time as an elementary school counselor. I was amazed at how comfortable I was at LTSS. I was drawn toward the *ecumenical* spirit on campus. More than just Lutherans — Methodists, Episcopalians, Pentecostals, Catholics, and even a few Baptists — find a connection here.

Now, I am half-way toward earning my master of divinity degree. I am being educated in a healthy, ecumenical environment. I am able to dialogue with those from different denominations and answer students' and professors' questions about Baptists. And my

Baptist identity is strengthened through communion with other Baptists in the classes taught by Ginger Barfield.



there that I learned the Bible stories, learned about missions, and learned that God had a purpose for my life.

When I went away to college, the Baptist Student Union at Clemson University became a special community of faith for me. Under the leadership

of Tim Willis as pastor, mentor and friend and among the other Baptist students, my faith deepened as I learned to ask questions and own my faith. It was here that I first began to feel the call to seminary.

After graduating from Clemson in 1996 with a bachelor of arts degree in psychology, I enrolled in the graduate program for elementary school counseling at the University of South Carolina. I received my masters in education in 1999 and began working as a school counselor in Lexington. Through several years in the school counseling experience, I began to further sense God's call to seminary and to direct, full-time ministry. It was about this time that the Baptist Studies program became a reality.

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"It's a hard job, one that constantly stretches and expands my ideas of what ministry is."

**- Sara Jane Moran
on being a
hospital chaplain**

CBF influences career path of hospital chaplain resident Sara Jane Moran

Sara Jane Moran, a resident chaplain at Spartanburg Regional Medical Center, is wrapped up in CBF.

She graduated from Gardner-Webb's School of Divinity in May 2006 and was ordained by Pelham Road Baptist Church in Greenville shortly after.

"CBF helped support my schooling and I am very grateful for all the encouragement CBF people gave me," she said. "I attended multiple gatherings where I had contact with CBF churches and the staff and leadership of CBF in both South and North Carolina."

"In fact," she said, "it was at a CBF lunch that Marion Aldridge and Terry Brooks suggested to me that I should look into a chaplain residency program. Before then, I hadn't considered that option."

That's how she ended up in Spartanburg, working for another long-time CBF supporter, Carson Rogerson, a former chaplain and pastor in Columbia who now heads the chaplain residency program at Spartanburg Regional.

"It is such an enriching, rewarding, and challenging ministry at the hospital," Sara Jane said.

"We pray to be a non-threatening spiritual presence and resource for those in the hospital facing times of decision and crisis. I may be called upon to pray for a patient before surgery or respond to deaths and sit with the family as they grieve and remember their loved ones. The Emergency Center is always fast-paced. When I am on-call, I am part of the trauma team that comes in to be support for the patient and the family in the emergency room. It's a hard job, one that constantly stretches and expands my ideas of what ministry is."

Sara Jane had served as an intern at Pelham Road as part of her Master of Divinity training. "John Roy (the senior pastor) served as a wonderful mentor for me and allowed me to be a part of many different areas of the church," she said. "I preached, taught, did office work, helped plan funerals and weddings, made hospital visits, did research for sermons, and sat in on all staff meetings. I am so blessed to have the family at Pelham Road Baptist Church support me. My ordination process was meaningful from start to finish, and I served the Lord's Supper as my first act as a *reverend*."