

MAY 2006





FELLOWSHIP



COOPERATIVE BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP OF SOUTH CAROLINA

2006 State Mission Offering Goal: \$80,000

to support

-  Our work with internationals in South Carolina, particularly the Japanese ministry based in the Upstate. Back page.
-  Our work with the poor in Allendale through a partnership with Christ Central Ministries. Cover and page 3.
-  Our work with Metanoia, a SC/CBF urban ministry in North Charleston that is working to transform one neighborhood through a multitude of programs. Cover and page 2.
-  Our partnership between SC/CBF churches and Baptists in Belgium. Page 3.

Materials to help promote the offering are available through the SC/CBF office. Speakers knowledgeable about the missions work going on in South Carolina are also available to speak at your churches. Contact Missions Coordinator Beverly Greer at beverly@cbfsc.org.



Seven churches joined Christ Central Ministries in Allendale for a work day recently to do some cleaning, painting, and repairing. This photo was taken during a break and prayer time. Work days are scheduled at least twice a year.

Christ Central Ministries offers 'A place for families in time of crisis'

The young mother and her three small children fled their house in the middle of the night, escaping an abusive husband and father. They took refuge with an elderly aunt who offered them shelter but had nothing else to give.

Christ Central Mission House in Allendale did have more to give. Christ Central, a SC/CBF missions partner, replaced the paper towels the baby was wearing with diapers, found jackets and clothes for all the family, provided baby formula and food, and gave them enough support to last while the mother went job hunting.

"I was so thankful that we were able

to assist this family," said Carol Hollday, youth and children's minister at First Baptist Church in Allendale. "When she came here, the woman was desperate and pathetic. Now, the woman has a job and the family is getting back on its feet. This is the most important ministry we offer — a place for families in time of crisis."

The help offered this family is just one example of many of the important ministries being carried out every day through Christ Central Ministries and the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of South Carolina through its State Missions Offering.

Metanoia

This spring, Metanoia partnered with Chicora Elementary School, the Charleston Children's Garden Project, Americorps, and Eagle Scout Marvin Brown from St. Matthew Baptist Church in North Charleston to plant a children's garden at Chicora Elementary. These Young Leaders from Metanoia helped with the planting. Metanoia is the urban ministry sponsored by SC/CBF in North Charleston. It is supported through gifts to the State Missions Offering.



JUST Sharing

A MISSION OPPORTUNITY

For your local congregation

A Book and Movie Review by Mario al Dridgio (an alias to protect the real writer from discovery by Conspiracy Theorists). Al Dridgio lives in a major city in one of the Carolinas somewhere between Spartanburg and Charleston. Some believe he is a Baptist. Others are not even certain if he is a Christian. It is rumored that he has degrees in Fine Arts and Theology.

Most Christians have never thought about whether there was a Mrs. Jesus. Many are offended by the notion. That won't keep folks silent on the subject over the next few weeks and months. The real question is whether Christians will be involved in the conversation or not. Are Christians going to let people who know little about the Bible or Jesus try to figure things out with no help from the Church?

Dan Brown has written a best-selling work of fiction titled **The Da Vinci Code**. The book and the motion picture (starring Tom Hanks) are raising a multitude of questions by millions who do not attend our churches (and a few million who do).

What exactly was Jesus' relationship with Mary? Were they married? And which Mary are we talking about, Mary the sister of Martha and Lazarus or Mary Magdalene?

Does Jesus have great-great-etc.-grandkids walking around on earth today, as the novel claims?

What are the Gnostic Gospels and why are they not in our Bible? Was there a conspiracy to keep certain books out of the Canon? What is the Canon?

What role did the Emperor Constantine play in the early church?

Who is Dan Brown and what does he know about religion and art?

The answer to that last question is "Just enough to be dangerous and make a couple of million dollars in the process."

This reviewer has good news and bad news.

The good news is that multitudes will be talking about Jesus, the Bible, church history and spiritual matters over the next few months who have given no thought to God in years or decades.

The bad news is that most Christians and congregations will be poorly prepared to respond to legitimate questions about faith?

What exactly does the Bible say about Jesus and his family? He had a mom, dad, brothers and sisters. Because the Roman Catholic Church believes that his mother (another Mary) never ever had sex with her husband Joseph, then they argue that the Bible refers to Jesus' cousins rather than to his brothers and sisters.

Did Jesus have children with his wife or mistress Mary? I have heard just one Bible scholar ever talk seriously about the possibility of Jesus being married. I have heard or read no scholar who thinks the Bible or the early church somehow hid from the world a secret Holy Family, fathered by Jesus. The idea may sell books, but it has no validity. When you can get liberal and fundamentalist Christians to agree on something, you probably ought to take that to the bank. They agree on this! Jesus was a bachelor.

What about the Gnostics? The Gnostics were heretics in the early church who believed that Jesus was pretend and not real. They thought God would not have dirtied himself with the soil of the earth. According to the Gnostics, Jesus just seemed to be human. That is a study to ask your pastor to lead.

Were there letters and gospels written that are not in our Bibles? Yes. How did we get our Bible? Ask someone who knows church history to teach a class on this. It is a fascinating study. There was no conspiracy.

As for the inadequate art history in the **Da Vinci Code**... but that's another story. Someone else can write about that.



METANOIA: This student at left is one of many who are now a part of the Young Leaders Program at Metanoia in North Charleston. Go to www.cbfofsc.org/metanoia for more information.

BELGIUM

Oakland Baptist Church in Rock Hill and the Baptist Church of Beaufort are two of the SC/CBF churches that have worked with Baptists in Belgium.

At left, David Townsend (kneeling), a member of the Baptist Church of Beaufort, works alongside a Baptist man from Belgium to repair a Baptist church building in Lombardsdadj, Begium.

Below, Oakland members Bo Coleman and Tom and Judy Luke talk with Sissi Green, right, and a young Arab man at the Oasis Centre in Brussels. Sissi is the daughter of CBF field personnel Butch and Nell Green. She is a student at the University of South Carolina and was at home in Belgium last summer when this photo was taken. Butch and Nell will be living in Rock Hill while they are on home assignment beginning later this year. They are available to speak in churches all across the state.



“We not only have the responsibility but the privilege of being the presence of Christ, starting in our state neighborhood of South Carolina. We are called to care and share from our blessings with those who in many ways have been forgotten.”

—Missions Coordinator

Beverly Greer

“The most effective way to minister to Asians is through someone from the same cultural background but several Asian pastors no longer have financial support to continue their ministry. Many times Aki and Yoko are the only Japanese speaking presence that an Asian who is seeking the services of mental health, is in a nursing home or hospital has. They are in a unique position to minister in a holistic way. Through our offerings we help provide regular worship services for the small Japanese Christian community.”

—Missions Coordinator Beverly Greer

Aki and Yoko Shigemi lead our SC/CBF work among internationals, particularly the Japanese in the Upstate. Read Aki's article on the back page.



JUST Sharing

The State Missions Offering supports the work between SC/CBF churches and those in Belgium. Go to www.cbfofsc.org/belgium for more information about our relationship with Belgium Baptists.



ALLENDALE

Christ Central Ministries Mission House in Allendale. Go to www.cbfofsc.org/allendale for more information.



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Macon Sheppard

(843) 722-1045

moderator@cbfosc.org

Marion Aldridge, Coordinator

(803) 779-1888

Fax: (803) 779-2242

E-Mail: Marion@cbfosc.org

Sue Poss, Editor

(864) 469-0779

editor@cbfosc.org

SC/CBF Website: www.cbfosc.org

National CBF: www.thefellowship.info

Ministry to internationals

Helping Asian neighbors find salvation

*Is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the
God of Gentiles too? Yes, of Gentiles too.
since there is only one God (Romans 3:29-
30a, NIV)*

By Aki Shigemi

I have worked in the Upstate of South Carolina as a Japanese pastor for seven years and Asian counselor for two years. God has given me many opportunities to meet with Japanese and Asian people

outside of church. I visit nursing homes, hospitals and the homes of Asians as a counselor rather than a Christian pastor.

Many Asians have lived in this state for more than 10 years but they have never heard anything about Jesus's love. They are suffering with loneliness in hospitals and fear their deaths.

Asian culture is different from the western culture. Asians are superstitious and believe in many good and evil gods. When I visit them, I try to tell them of God's salvation and eternal life but it is very difficult to comfort them when they do not have basic Bible knowledge. I feel a strong commitment to save their lonely souls in this state.

The most serious problem right now is that American society has little interest in the salvation of Asian neighbors. When South Carolina CBF invited me here, there were a lot of Asian churches: Indian, Laotian, Cambodian, Vietnamese, Chinese and our Japanese church.

Many Asian churches have closed their doors and Asian pastors moved to other

Women prepare traditional Japanese food to serve following the worship services each Sunday. From left are Yoko Shigemi, Yukie James, Fumi George, Chiaki Jones, and Jeral Crowe. The group meets at Boulevard Baptist Church in Anderson on the second Sunday of each month.

states because of financial problems. Yet, the Asian population is increasing rapidly in South Carolina.

South Carolina churches used to have a big missions mind to reach out to Asian population. Asian missions need more time, more money and more prayer. I am ready for a showdown with the unconcerned of this society. I believe that to introduce God's love to Asian neighbors is not only my responsibility but also the responsibility that all Christians have to carry on their shoulders.

My dream is that no Asian neighbor should die without knowing eternal life and Jesus's cross and resurrection.



Mihoko Kakuno and her two children, Ryuya and Shogo, are part of the ESL program of Boulevard Baptist Church, Anderson. The work that Aki and Yoko Shigemi are doing among Asians is supported through the SC/CBF State Missions Offering. Go to www.cbfosc.org/internationals for more information.



JUST
Sharing