

SEPTEMBER 2005

FELLOWSHIP

COOPERATIVE BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP OF SOUTH CAROLINA



Photos
courtesy
of Winnie
Williams,
past
moderator
of SC/CBF.

Native costumes from around the world, including Africa and Japan, were just one indication of the variety of local Baptists who found their way to the Centenary World Congress in Birmingham, England.



baptist world alliance

A chance to join hands to circle the globe for Jesus Christ

By Beverly Greer
Missions Coordinator

At the New Coventry Cathedral in Coventry, England, there is a sign that reads, "Our task is great but God is greater." Being the presence of Christ in our personal worlds and around the world helps define the phrase "Our task is great."

On the first evening of the Centenary Congress people representing various groups that comprise the Baptist World Alliance walked among the delegates in the Congress Hall carrying banners and signs that identified their union or organization. At the same time on a stage in the center of the Hall a procession of international Baptists

spoke the words of the theme, "Jesus Christ Living Water" one at a time each in their native language.

The preacher for the evening, Myra Blyth, lecturer at Regents Park College, the Baptist component of Oxford College in England reminded us that actions speak louder than words and if we take the words (I am God) out of Jesus' mouth he still says it by what he does and who he is. She encouraged us to follow his example and "reach out in missionary love."

Participating in the Baptist World Alliance gave me a better understanding of the ways we join hands to encircle the globe with the love of Jesus (continued on page 3)

18 go from The Baptist Church of Beafort

BWA brings new perspective

Harry Rowland, pastor of The Baptist Church of Beaufort, led a group of 18 from his church to the Baptist World Congress. These are his reflections:

I enjoyed the BWA, my first, because it gave me a larger world view perspective. At the national conventions I have attended, I would hear about what was happening in other parts of the world but it was most often from people like me — missionaries — who had gone to live there.

At the BWA I was confronted with national leaders and Christians who were seeking to serve Christ in their homelands. They were there regardless of hardship, support, or acceptance. They had to endure persecutions that foreign missionaries can avoid.

Their commitment to Christ was both humbling and inspiring. The worship experiences gave me the opportunity to worship like I envision heaven — all God's children together worshipping Him. The barriers of language, custom, economics, etc., were at a (continued on page 3)



Harry
Rowland

The Centenary Congress of the Baptist World Alliance was held in Birmingham, England, July 27-31.
Read more about the event at www.bwanet.org.

As Baptists we learn from a very young Sunbeam age that coded into our DNA is a love for *missions*. Why, most of us have scarcely used that word in the singular, just in the plural! We know that the call of Christ upon us is to act as Jesus, to share good news and compassion, to forgive, to care about every person, to heal, to feed, to shelter, and to restore. We are Baptists; missions is our baby.

If missions is our baby, then theological education is the cradle of missions. If we care about our future ability as churches to answer that call of Christ, then we must pay careful attention to the development right now of young persons who will be called as our leaders. A young person being called into ministry is never an accident!

These young ones, some in our churches right now, must be nurtured and trained to hear their calling. They must be told at a tender age that they are worthy and wanted as Christ's servants and agents. What do we say to children and young adults in our congregations? Do we tell them we hope they will become ministers? Do we aim the best and brightest of them toward divinity school with our expectations and our church budgets? Do we listen to a Holy Spirit ourselves and follow that Spirit's whisperings to build our congregations to become nurseries for healthy young leaders?

There are some things that any congregation can do to be faithful to the call of Christ in raising up young leaders and future ministers. First, be lavish in attention to children. Spend money on them for good programming and teacher training and support. Let some children's sermons speak to them of the calling of Samuel and the holy voice which may possibly come to them. Teach them that God's voice will surely come to each of them in some way. Train them to expect it. Share with them your hope that some of them will become ministers.

Second, include for youth and young adults an annual program directly focused on their vocational calling, including the possibility of ministry. The Samuel Project of the Baptist Theological Seminary at

Richmond is a good example. Make sure that you as adults have close personal relationships with the teens and young adults in your church, the jewels in your crown. Make sure they know you love and value them and expect wonderful things from them. Make VIPs out of those who discern a calling to ministry.

Third, pick a divinity school, any divinity school, and put a permanent line item in your church budget to support directly the education of young ministers. The Baptist House at the Lutheran Southern Theological Seminary in Columbia is a good choice. There are at least ten future Baptist ministers there whose direct relationship with your church could assist the Holy Spirit in bringing you together for ministry one fine day. Its director, Ginger Barfield, prays daily that South Carolina Baptists will remember we cannot leave our future ministry to chance, and that we must listen for that Spirit's call on us to call out these leaders.

There are several excellent CBF consortium divinity schools near South Carolina at Mercer, at Wake Forest, at Duke, at Campbell, at Gardner-Webb and at Emory. From which one will your next pastor come? Do you want to take God's hand to make sure there is a well-trained minister for you when you need one?

Finally and most important, pray as a congregation for those in your church fold and for unknown young Baptists who are wrestling with that Holy Spirit to discern a call into ministry, or to figure out how they can possibly afford a theological degree. Be their partners, be their nurturers, and one day be their congregations.

It only takes a few extra long months of a clergy search process, or just a few weeks with a disappointing clergy person, for a church to realize fully the great need and responsibility we share for intentional development of good ministry and missions leaders. We are Baptists, missions is our baby, theological education is the cradle of missions, and the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world. Rock on! May God be in that rocking for you.



By Kelly Belcher
Moderator

**The
hand
that
rocks
the
cradle
rules
the
world**

Kelly is
associate
pastor of
Fernwood
Baptist Church
in Spartanburg.



BWA — (continued from page 1)

Christ. The BWA gives us an historic global connection to “go into all the world.”

There was evidence all around of diverse languages, customs, clothing, music and worship styles. The music ranged from praise choruses to the Hallelujah Chorus which prompted Julie Aldridge of Columbia to comment that there was something for everyone in the music.

Hardy Clemons, retired senior pastor of First Baptist Church Greenville, said, “To see that much unity amid that much diversity was a thing of beauty to behold. It was a lot like heaven will probably be, but less ecumenical. It made me glad to be a Baptist Christian – and, for my money, I think this is one of the best and most exciting times in

history to be Baptist!”

The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship is one of the newest members of the BWA. “...It is important for SC/CBF to participate in the BWA to show our support to our sisters and brothers around the world,” said Ellen Sechrest, minister of youth at Boulevard Baptist Church in Anderson. “We may not worship the same way, share all the same beliefs, or even dress the same, but we all worship the same God. It is important for the world to see that such a diverse group can come together and put aside culture and theological differences in order to worship Christ.”

Even as members of the BWA, our task of sharing “Jesus Christ Living Water” with the world is great but our God is greater!

SC/CBF well-represented at BWA

In addition to the 18 members of the Baptist Church of Beaufort who attended BWA, a number of others from SC/CBF also were there. Among them were:

From Greenville: Hardy and Ardelle Clemons and Dee and Tom Buford.

From Anderson: Johnny and Sandy McKinney, Ellen Sechrest, and Robbie Prince.

From Columbia: Marion Aldridge, Julie Aldridge, Evelyn and Fred Miller.

From Clemson: Winnie Williams.



Baptists from India at the BWA.

The Baptist World Alliance is a fellowship of 213 Baptist unions and conventions representing a community of approximately 80 million Baptists. The BWA unites Baptists worldwide, leads in evangelism, responds to people in need and defends human rights.

Beaufort —

(continued from page 1)

minimum while the commonality of a love for Jesus was at the forefront.

It is important that SC/CBF people participate in the BWA because it can provide us a truer perspective of our place in God's kingdom. It is not all about us as a people or a fellowship. It is all about Jesus. As He is lifted up and we look outside ourselves then conflict lessens and miracles occur. Just dealing with ourselves can cause us to be “so heavenly minded that we are no earthly good.”

Two state conventions join BWA

The Baptist General Convention of Texas and the Baptist General Association of Virginia are the newest members of the Baptist World Alliance. Conditional acceptance was also given to the Baptist Union of Churches in the Central African Republic. With these additions the BWA is now comprised of 213 members. The General Council approved a 2006 budget of \$2,345,275, an increase over 2005's \$1,974,773 budget.

2005 State Missions Offering

to support partnership efforts with the Union of Baptists in Belgium; work with internationals at various sites in South Carolina; the partnership with Christ Central Ministries among the poor in Allendale; and Metanoia, our SC/CBF urban ministry in Charleston.

**\$110,000
Goal**

Promotional materials available
from the SC/CBF Resource Center.

**Cooperative Baptist Fellowship
of South Carolina**
P.O. Box 11159
Columbia, SC 29211



Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Greenville SC
Permit 579

September 2005

Kelly Belcher, Moderator
(864) 582-7467
klbel@bellsouth.net

Marion Aldridge, Coordinator
(803) 779-1888
Fax: (803) 779-2242
E-Mail: Marion@cbfosc.org

Sue Poss, Editor
(864) 848-3346
editor@cbfosc.org

SC/CBF Website: www.cbfosc.org
National CBF: www.thefellowship.info

A WORLD OF DIVERSITY

Opening Doors of Dialogue

Fall Convocation

November 14

Eau Claire Baptist Church
Columbia

Register
online now,
or look for a
registration
form in the
October
newsletter.

2:00 p. m.	Registration
2:30 - 3:30	Walter Edgar
3:30 - 4:00	Break
4:00 - 5:30	Panel Discussion
5:30 - 6:30	Dinner & Fellowship
6:30 - 7:45	Worship with Tom Long

Walter Edgar is a history professor and director of the Institute for Southern Studies at the University of South Carolina. He has written or edited numerous books about South Carolina and the American South, including *South Carolina: A History*, the first new history of the state in more than 60 years. His most recent book is *Partisans & Redcoats: The Southern Conflict that Turned the Tide of the American Revolution* is in its fourth printing. Edgar has two weekly radio shows heard statewide on SC Educational Radio: "Walter Edgar's Journal," a look at contemporary issues in historical context, and "Southern Read," a reading of works by some of the best contemporary Southern writers.



Panel:

Omar Shaheed, Muslim
Sandford Marcus, Jew
Michael Root, Christian
Nancy Songer, Buddhist
Arunima Sindha, Hindu
(Panel moderated by Carl
Evans of USC)

Thomas G. Long is the Bandy Professor of Preaching at Candler School of Theology at Emory University in Atlanta. He has previously taught preaching at Princeton, Columbia, and Erskine seminaries. He is the author of several books on preaching and worship as well as biblical commentaries on Matthew and Hebrews. He served as the senior homiletics editor of *The New Interpreter's Bible*. His latest books are *Testimony: Talking Ourselves into Being Christian* and *The Witness of Preaching, Second Edition*.

