



JULY-AUGUST 2008

FELLOWSHIP



Not thinking about Christmas right now? Boulevard is

It's the middle of the summer so why think about Christmas? Because perhaps your church would like to consider now sponsoring an Alternative Christmas Gift Fair to raise money for local, state, national and international missions.

That's what Boulevard Baptist Church in Anderson has done

for the past three years and will do again this November. "Our purpose in having the fair is to be good stewards of our resources," said Ellen Sechrest, minister of youth and children. "We want to bring to light that we live abundantly and need to share our wealth. We want people to start

and the needs," Ellen said. "You then walk around, talk to the people, and mark on your sheet your 'purchases.'"

At check out, for every \$10 donated, buyers get a card designed by a local artist. The cards say "A gift has been given in your name to _____," and buyers can then send the cards to those they want to honor.

In addition to the projects displayed, store booths that sell goods are also available.

"We have increased our donations each year," Ellen said. "In 2007 we were just shy of \$21,000 for the booths, not including the store. We don't set a goal because we feel anything given to charity is a success," she said.

Already Ellen has inquiries from groups interested in participating in the 2009 Alternative Mission Fair. A decision will be made in August as to who participates. "This has become a wonderful tradition for us at Boulevard," Ellen said. "The best thing about it is that you know your money is going to a great cause and your gift will keep on giving and helps so many. We are committed to trying to help as many as possible.

E-mail Ellen at esechrest@boulevardbaptist.com.

2007 Recipients

Project Ruth	\$4,010
Doctors Without Borders	\$2,392
Honduras	\$2,480
Free Medical Clinic	\$2,125
Bread for the World	\$2,175
Allendale	\$1,200
Global Women	\$930
Heifer International	\$3,235
Rauschebusch Center	\$2,170

giving gifts that matter in life rather than just another sweater or knickknack to dust."

A committee from Boulevard each year selects about 10 charities to help through its fair.

Each recipient sets up a booth in the fellowship hall on a Saturday and Sunday. "Shoppers get a clipboard with a form listing the booths

Fair trade products — including coffee, chocolates, and crafts from third world countries, are also sold at the fair. Proceeds from these sales in 2007 went to a hydromissions organization in Mauldin that offers products to provide clean water to third world countries, to a family in need, and to a microloan project through the Kiva organization.

Communicating in Ghana

Former SC/CBF intern building relationships, helping convention with media projects

Spending the summer in Ghana, former SC/CBF intern Draper Smith is the first person sent to that country by the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

She is there in support of the "memorandum of understanding" partnership signed by CBF and the Ghana Baptist Convention in April.

Draper, a member of First Baptist Church in Greenville, is helping the convention develop its web site and create a newsletter. "In addition, I will spend my time building relationships and learning all about the Ghana Baptist Convention, the country and its culture to determine how mission teams from the US could best meet the largest Ghanaian needs," she said. "In order to deepen the partnership CBF has with the Convention, I can figure out what type of mission groups are needed, what they would do when they get here, what issues they would face, etc." This assessment will include visiting mission fields throughout the country.

Draper's e-mail is draper.smith@gmail.com. She will be in Ghana through Aug. 22.



Draper Smith with Harry Rowland, CBF's Director of Missional Church Ministries.



Brandon Green is SC/CBF summer intern

Brandon Micah Green, 19, is serving as summer intern for SC/CBF. Brandon is a rising sophomore at the University of South Carolina, with an anthropology major and a social work minor. He plans to join the Peace Corps when he graduates and expects to work in some area of humanitarian assistance afterward.

Brandon enjoys writing and playing music, is a pianist, drummer and vocalist. "I love movies and I love critiquing them. I play video games like any other college boy my age. I love to read and to let my imagination soar into the realm of the unknown. I enjoy writing when I can."

Unlike most college sophomores, Brandon grew up in Dakar, Senegal; Miami, FL; and Brussels, Belgium, is fluent in French

and proficient in Dutch. He has been living in South Carolina for the past two years and was the winner of the *My Favorite Baptist* scholarship in 2007.

As a SC/CBF intern, Brandon is helping with routine office work such as filing, sorting, and data entry. He is also compiling some statistical data, doing research, and assisting with updating communication strategies. "This is a great opportunity for me to familiarize myself even more with the inner-workings of a missions organization," he said. "I'm sure it will greatly help me as far as my studies and future jobs are concerned."

Brandon is the son of Nell and Butch Green, CBF field personnel now living in Rock Hill.

Jennie and Steve Lemons with Rivertown Community Church members Richard and Deborah Dantzler. Steve is the chaplain at Callie Self Memorial Hospital in Greenwood.



Rivertown celebrates 10th year anniversary

Rivertown Community Church in Conway is 10 years old. The church celebrated the anniversary in June.

A part of the celebration included an emphasis on the **Just Sharing** state missions offering. The church had set a goal of \$1,000 and actually collected \$1,173. In addition, church members helped stock the pantry of Shepherd's Table, a local soup kitchen that the church helped establish, as part of its offering that day.

Preacher for the anniversary celebration was Stephen Lemons. Beverly Greer, SC/CBF's missions coordinator, also participated in the service.

The day included lots of music led by a reunion praise team composed of both former and current church members.

"There was a time for people to re-member and share how God has blessed

us through the years," said church member Deborah Dantzler, a former member of the SC/CBF Coordinating Council. "Some of those blessings expressed were baby dedications, acceptance for those who previously had not felt accepted, ordination of one minister, baptisms and God's answering our prayers with a 'no' when what we asked for was not what God wanted."

Rivertown's building is used nearly every day. On Tuesdays, a Hispanic congregation meets for prayer. Wednesday brings a women's Bible study group and praise team practice. On Thursdays, the Domestic Abuse Center holds meetings for people trying to break the cycle of domestic violence. On Fridays and Saturdays, the Hispanic congregation meets for worship. Beyond this regular

schedule other activities are held in the building, including referee and umpire training.

The church first met in the Conway Primary School cafeteria. "Try sitting on those little stools for an hour!" Deborah said. "Then, one Sunday we couldn't meet at the school and the Waccamaw Youth Center, a home for abused boys, let us meet at their house. We were sitting in the windowsills because of the coziness."

In October 2007 Mark Tidsworth, a pastoral counselor in Columbia, led the congregation in a discerning retreat about the church's future. "That has been a watershed event in the life of our church," Deborah said.

"It really was a wonderful day, one of those days I will always remember," Deborah said.

MEETINGS

R Us

“When I was growing up, the way we showed we were good Christians was by going to meetings.” When I heard Debbie Dantzler say that at the recent South

Carolina Christian Action Council meeting, I knew she was right. Meetings R Us! We were at church for worship Sunday morning and Sunday night, on Monday night for visitation, Tuesday night for Royal Ambassadors, and Wednesday night for prayer meeting.

The times, they are a-changing. At the last church I pastored, I knew our Sunday night service was dead one evening when we had 19 people in attendance, and we paid five of them to be there—the pastor, the associate pastor, the minister of music, the organist and the custodian. When I suggested that we could all use our resources more wisely by having a “divorce support group” on Sunday evening and/or other events which were more responsive to real human needs, it was interesting that the people who liked my preaching least were the ones who insisted that we keep on with our Sunday evening meetings. Their parents had instructed those folks 60 years ago that the way they showed they were good Christians was by congregating, even if they slept through the event.

Twenty-first century people are not “meeting” people in the same way we once were. They don’t want to waste their time listening to what they call a “talking head.” Instead, they instant message, Facebook, Flair, YouTube, e-mail, webcam, internet and iPod. CBF is trying to figure out how to function, and how to help our partner churches to function, in the 21st century. In the past few months, some of us have been debating how often we need to meet. For what reasons do we need to meet? The price of gasoline makes this a relevant discussion for every church. “Just because we always have” is not good enough. Of course, the

Bible instructs us, “Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together.” So, we will always need to have face-to-face conversations. We will always need to worship as part of a community of faith.

If you need to have a meeting, could it be shorter, more fun, more flexible, more practical, and more interactive? As a result, it might be more honest, more compelling and more productive.

The Bible also says, “Redeem the time,” which I interpret to mean that we need to be good stewards of the precious commodity of time. Maybe we don’t need to meet as much as we once did.

I believe that every relevant and thriving church

Coordinator’s Column



By Marion Aldridge
Coordinator

needs to drop at least one program a year. I am not the same person I was 40 years ago, and a church should not be the same as it was 40 years ago. There comes a time to leave some things behind, to grow up, to move on.

Spiritually, we need to get over our childhood and adolescent habits and opinions: “By this time you ought to be teachers yourselves, yet I find you still need someone to sit down with you and go over the basics about God again, starting from square

one—baby’s milk, when you should have been on solid food long ago!” That is from the letter to the Hebrews.

Organizationally, we ought also to move past old paradigms that are no longer fruitful, if they ever were. I have always been perplexed by people who were in “Training Union” for 50 years or so whose primary ability after all those years of being “trained” seems to be that they are able to go to more meetings!

May God help our churches! I sincerely pray that we make different mistakes in the next hundred years than we did in the past hundred. Meeting less and talking less and actually achieving more will be a good start.

Pledges from economic stimulus checks

If you have pledged all or some of your U.S. government economic stimulus check to the Second Chance Offering, please remember to send your gift to the SC/CBF office. If you haven’t pledged but would like to make a contribution, simply mark your gift accordingly. The Second Chance Offering will help stimulate change and affect systemic problems in Allendale.

Korea Baptists want to exchange

The Korean Baptist Press is looking for 50 host families for their student exchange program for the upcoming school year starting in August. Go to our web site for information.

Fall Work Day— Oct. 4

Greenwood’s United Center for Community Care

1. Remove carpet
2. Demolition of walls
3. Repairs (carpentry and plumbing)
4. Cleaning, especially in the commercial kitchen
5. Painting

Local contacts: Tony Hopkins and Jack Parham

General Information: Beverly Greer, missions coordinator, beverly@cbfosc.org

Allendale

1. Construction
2. Painting
3. Yard work
4. Thrift store work
5. Nursing home visit
6. Blood pressure screening
7. Children’s activity
8. Possible sports clinic

Local contact: Chip Reeves

YOUTH

Friday, Oct. 3

EVENT

9 p.m. Worship Celebration

- all church youth groups are welcome
- there will be a late night ice cream social so churches who come after football games will still have group time
- groups participating at Greenwood and Allendale can both attend
- final details and location will be announced shortly

CHECK THE WEB SITE FOR DETAILS AND TO REGISTER.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

July-August 2008

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With right priorities, Deming gets new call

David Deming thinks it's partly because he chose to take care of his sick mother that he is now pastor of Swift Creek Baptist Church in Hartsville.

For the past 15 years, he has served two congregations, Brunson and Hickory Grove Baptist churches in Hampton County.

The Swift Creek search committee had originally contacted David in August 2007 to schedule a brief visit. But his mother became ill and he had to postpone. With other commitments, including his daughter's wedding, it was January before he met the committee for the first time.

Other visits ensued and eventually David was called as pastor. "The committee implied that had I not chosen to care for the needs of my mother, the conversation might have been over," he said.

David, a former member of the SC/CBF Coordinating Council, said Swift Creek is aligned with both the Southern

Baptist Convention and the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. "Results of a survey distributed to the congregation by the committee indicate that they are comfortable with that identity," he said. "The members at Swift Creek are given the opportunity to choose through which channel their mission dollars go. As at Brunson, both groups' mission offerings are promoted."

David was born in Iliion, NY, but considers Lynchburg, VA, his hometown. He earned a bachelor of music education degree from Carson-Newman College in 1978 and a master of divinity degree from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary in 1981. He completed additional study in New Testament and Greek at New Orleans and also attended the School of Pastoral Care at Virginia Baptist Hospital for two years.

He served four churches in Louisiana and Virginia before coming to Brunson and Hickory Grove in August 1993. "Our children Adam (25) and Elizabeth (22) grew up there, graduated from high school there, and have graduated from

college while we were there," David said.

Elizabeth is now married and living in Anderson with her husband Sawyer Nix. Adam graduated from the S.C. Criminal Justice Academy in February and is now a member of the Charleston Police Department.

While in New Orleans, David met and married his wife Sandra, a native of Denmark, SC, who earned a master of religious education degree from New Orleans and a master of education in special education from Lynchburg College. They have been married for 29 years.

David began his work at Swift Creek on June 29. "In Swift Creek's tradition, they observe the ordinance of the Lord's Supper on fifth Sundays, so I began my work here on a communion Sunday. I really like that!"

"I have a certain amount of dread leaving two beloved congregations that I have served for 15 years, but I also am anticipating the joys and challenges of serving the congregation at Swift Creek," he said.