

FELLOWSHIP NEWS

COOPERATIVE BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP OF SOUTH CAROLINA



MAY 2002

Coordinator Marion Aldridge writes
about Kenya. Inside.



Jones: Missions will be defining point for CBF

Mack Dene Jones thinks a strong missions program is the key to growth in South Carolina CBF. "I think missions is our logo," said Mack, who was elected April 26 as the moderator of SC/CBF for 2002-03. "What we're starting in Charleston is going to define us."

Mack has been a member of First Baptist Church in Walterboro for more than 30 years. He is a native of Saluda, SC, and was an educator until his retirement. He was principal of Walterboro High School for 15 years and worked another 10 in the school district office there. He also taught U.S. history for 10 years at Greenwood High School.

Mack has been married to Betty Ann for 42 years. They have three grown children. Tony, a counselor at Midlands Tech in Columbia; Marshall, a professor at Winthrop University; and Russell, a pastoral counselor in Asheville. Tony is a graduate of Southern Seminary and Russell is a graduate of Southeastern.

"Like most people in CBF, I am bothered by the narrow-mindedness of many Baptists and the perception among the public that we are all like that," he said. "The message I will try to get out is that we are not all like those Baptists who get so much publicity."

As to CBF's future, Mack thinks it will either become a denomination or
(continued on page 2)



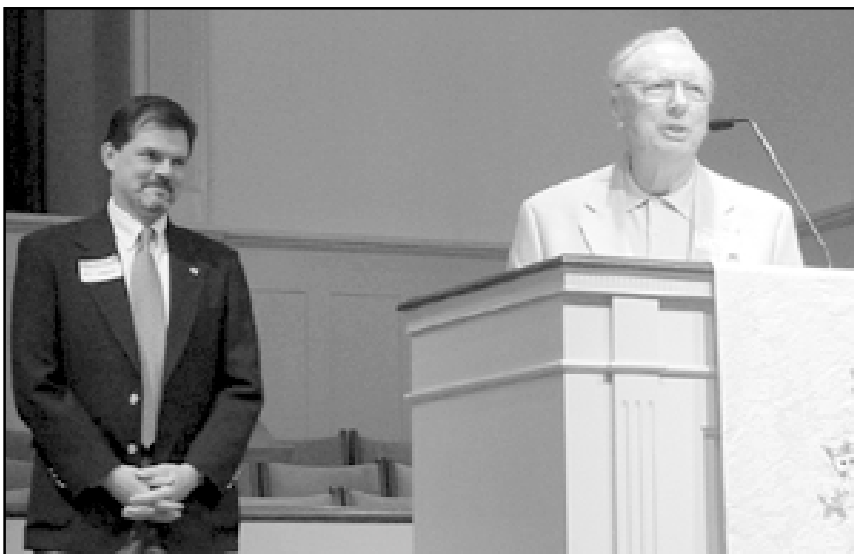
Mack Jones, moderator of CBF of South Carolina for 2002-03



2002 GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND BUSINESS MEETING

Missionaries commissioned

Bill Stanfield and Evelyn Oliveira were commissioned as the first SC/CBF missionaries on April 27 at the closing session of the 2002 General Assembly. They will spend two months working with CBF Urban Ministry missionaries before beginning work in Charleston in July. They are shown here as their family and members of the CBF state Missions Committee joined them for the commissioning prayer and laying on of hands. Their ministry will be supported in total by gifts to the South Carolina CBF Missions Offering. More coverage of the assembly and business meeting is inside this newsletter.



Bill Thomason, longtime treasurer of SC/CBF, was given a special gift at the General Assembly: a set of ecclesiastical banners that will hang in the Chapel at Furman University in his honor. Vic Greene Jr., associate chaplain at Furman (pictured behind Bill), and Fred Andrea, past moderator of SC/CBF, made the presentation. Bill is a Furman graduate and member of Boulevard Baptist Church in Anderson..

Officers and council members elected

New officers of SC/CBF, elected at the business session April 26, are: Moderator: Mack Jones, First Baptist Church, Walterboro; Past Moderator: Cathy Cole, First Baptist Church, Aiken; Moderator-Elect: Laurie Cox, Kathwood Baptist Church, Columbia; Secretary: Anne Hitt, Pelham Road Baptist Church, Greenville; Treasurer: Bill Thomason,

Boulevard Baptist Church, Anderson.

New members of the Coordinating Council with terms to expire in 2005 are: Kelly Belcher, Spartanburg; Gina Brock, Greenville; Marty Canaday, Rock Hill; Cal Griffin, Walterboro;



Moderator-elect Laurie Cox

Christy McMillin-Goodwin, Rock Hill; Van Newman, Columbia; Rob O'Neal, Lancaster; Terry Peele, Orangeburg; Helen Phillips, Gaffney; Gena Rabon, Camden; Ellen Sechrest, Anderson; Gene Smith, Sumter; Gene Sparks, Conway; and Bob Taylor, Surfside Beach.

Elected to the National Coordinating Council was Tiffany Hamilton, First Baptist Church, Clemson.

New members elected to the Nominating Committee are Gene Sparks, Conway, and Cathy Cole, Aiken.

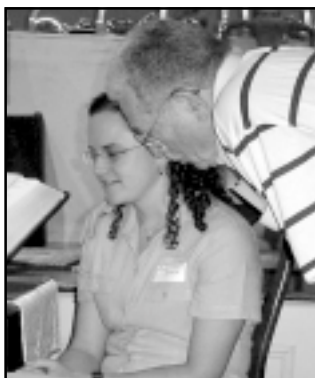
2002-2003 Budget

A budget of \$387,500 was adopted for 2002-03. This is an 8% increase over this year's budget of \$358,900. The budget year begins July 1.

Mack Jones *(continued from page 1)*

die. "I didn't think that earlier on," he said. "But with every step the SBC becomes more unbending and further alienates people like me."

So why is he willing to invest his time as moderator of SC/CBF? "If I am a Baptist, what choice do I have?"



Jim Tate, interim pastor of Florence Baptist Fellowship in Florence, speaks with Evelyn Oliveira as part of her commissioning service.

These were some of the participants in a break-out session on South Carolina CBF's partnership with Belgium.



Jana Craggs is a seminary graduate who's never worked in a church. Yet the pastoral care and ministry she provides on a daily basis often surpasses that given by many pastors.

Jana is an Hispanic Community Therapist with Greenville Mental Health Center in Greenville County. As one of only three bilingual therapists in the Upstate, she is already booked through July for non-emergency assessments.

"I provide individual, family, child, adolescent and occasionally marriage counseling to anybody who comes to the mental health center and needs to speak to someone in Spanish," she said. "I'm able to provide care to them in their native language."

Growing up in Louisville, KY, Jana said her parents always knew she would find a career ministering some way to Spanish-speaking people. "They didn't know how I would use my skills, but they knew that's what I would do."

Unlike many Americans who learn fluent Spanish while living abroad, Jana said she simply studied it in school and has honed her skills by working with Hispanics. "It is a gift from God," she said. "I find that I can relate to them much better by not only understanding their language but also some of their culture."

By knowing the Hispanic culture, she said she can more easily discern the difference between mental illness and simply a cultural difference of expression or understanding.

How to help Hispanic population

Jana says the best thing we as Christians and native English speakers can do for Hispanics is to learn their language so that we can communicate with them in their native tongue.

But recognizing that not everyone can do that, Jana suggests that churches or individuals willing to help Hispanics or wanting to start an Hispanic ministry, contact a social service agency in their county that already has programs in place and inquire as to how they can plug in.

Some needs are: ESL classes; adult GED classes; attorneys willing to help Hispanics apply for residency status pro bono; anyone willing to help them understand the redtape of living in the United States; transportation to get healthcare and in some cases money to pay for it.

Jana Craggs found her ministry in mental health — in Spanish



Jana said she also understands differences between Americans and Hispanics. "For Latinos, their faith is a part of who they are. They don't tend to separate their faith from the rest of their lives," she said. "But most Americans tend to keep their Sunday faith separate from whatever else they're involved with."

The number of Hispanics and Latinos in South Carolina grew from 30,551 in 1990 to 95,076 in 2000, according to the Census Bureau. While they comprised 1 percent of South Carolina's population in 1990, they now comprise 2.4 percent. Some Hispanics are in South Carolina legally on tourist or student visas but are not allowed to work. Therefore, they are not eligible for government benefits that would help them to pay for mental health counseling or for medical treatment.

Jana is a native of Louisville and a graduate of Southern Seminary. She was ordained by Jeff Street Community at Liberty, a Baptist congregation in Louisville. She married Rodney, a fellow Southern graduate who is now engaged in a ministry of his own as a chaplain with VistaCare Hospice of the Upstate.



Rodney Craggs

Jana and Rodney work in Greenville, live in Greer, and are members of Fernwood Baptist Church in Spartanburg.

Each year at the beginning of Advent, Jana and Rodney lead Fernwood in a grief worship service called "Hope for the Holidays."

"It is a way for people to acknowledge the griefs and burdens they have experienced during the past year, and corporately prepare themselves for the holidays," she said.

READERS write

"Since sometime last year, when I learned that my church, Lakeview Baptist, would forward donations designated to CBF, I have been giving to CBF through my church. I enjoy reading the Fellowship News. I'm 80 years of age and have MS, so I don't get to my church any more. I enjoyed reading about the young people lending a helping hand to New York after 9/11. That was a wonderful ministry."

—Bea Robinson

Project Ruth: Gypsy children still being helped

For years, South Carolina Baptists heard about Project Ruth from former CBF missionaries T and Kathie Thomas, who worked with Gypsies in Romania. The Thomas's have been back in the States working with CBF of Florida for more than two years but Project Ruth, a school for the Romanian Gypsy community, is still flourishing.

Much of its success is due to Ellen Sechrest, USA Sponsorship Coordinator for Project Ruth. Ellen is the minister to youth and children at Boulevard Baptist Church in Anderson and has just been elected to a three-year term on the Coordinating Council of SC/CBF.

Project Ruth works with disadvantaged Gypsy children by providing literacy training, education, meals, day center activities, medical help, hygiene support, and humanitarian aid. The Ruth School in



Ellen Sechrest, USA Sponsorship Coordinator for Project Ruth, and Andrew Brockbank, the Executive Director. To learn more about Project Ruth, visit the website at www.projectruth.ro or contact Ellen at esechrest@carol.net.

Bucharest serves children through the fifth grade and a \$400,000 fund-raising effort is now underway so that the school can expand.

Andrew Brockbank, from England, has been the Executive Director of the project for three years and visited South Carolina this spring to say thank you for the support of SC/CBF churches.

A graduate of Oxford, Andrew has always been interested in Christian relief work. Before taking the assignment in Romania, he worked in a similar position in Russia.

"Project Ruth's main emphasis is work among Gypsy com-

munities," he said, "but we do not exclude children on grounds of race, color or gender, seeking instead to encourage integration and acceptance of others."

As USA Sponsorship Coordinator, Ellen tries to find individuals and churches who are willing to sponsor a child for \$20 a month. This amount will cover most of a child's expenses including teacher salaries, supplies, and one hot meal each day.

"Finding sponsorships and partnerships helps us to be confident in planning for the future," she said. "It helps get us out of survival mode."

Currently there are about 40 US sponsors.

Project Ruth started 10 years ago with 20 people in a Sunday School class. Today, more than 250 children are being educated at the Ruth School in Bucharest and through literacy classes or day centers elsewhere.



BTSR — Two South Carolinians serve on the board of trustees of Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond: Sarah G. Herring, a member of First Baptist Church Greenville (second from left) and Winnie V. Williams, a member of First Baptist Church Clemson and a past moderator of SC/CBF. With them are Seminary President Thomas H. Graves (left) and board chair William P. Tuck.

SC/CBF briefly

Jeff Tobias is the interim pastor of New Hope Christian Fellowship in West Columbia. He was formerly pastor of Bethel Methodist Church in Salem, VA. He also served as Director of Education for the United Methodist Church for East Lincoln County in Denver, NC.



A native of Rock Hill, Jeff graduated from Furman University in 1987 and earned an M.Div. from Southern Seminary. "It was through the SC/CBF referral office that I was able to get reconnected to Baptists in South Carolina," he said.



Masai children near Nairobi, Kenya

Kids to Kids in Kenya: Our model for ministry is Jesus

By Marion Aldridge
Coordinator of SC/CBF

I am invariably impressed by the work being done by CBF missionaries. I have just returned from a trip to Nairobi, Kenya to visit with Sam and Melody Harrell. This couple represents CBF's commitment to minister to the most marginalized members of society, the least of the least, the poorest of the poor, the powerless, the disenfranchised.

Our model for this approach to ministry is Jesus. While the natural desire of the secular world (and much of the Christian world) is progress, ascending, climbing onward and upward, surmounting, overcoming and advancing, Jesus taught values that are quite different. From Jesus we learn about humility, descending, serving, submitting, emptying ourselves and dying.

Imagine a crowded, hot African city of three million people with hundreds of tall buildings, but not a breeze anywhere.

Between two of those massive structures is a vacant lot, about one-fourth the size of a football field. Eventually, another big building will be built there, but, for now, homeless men and women have thrown up a "slum" in that void. The "houses," if you can call them that, consist of lean-to type huts made of tin and cardboard. That no-longer-vacant lot now has about fifty residences, consisting of one room each, with 320 "squatters" crammed together there! The area burned to the ground at Christmas. Two people died. It was immediately built back. People have to live somewhere.

CBF is one of the co-sponsors of a ministry to the "street children" of this slum. We partner with an Anglican parish in a program called "Kids to Kids." School is voluntary in Kenya. Even public schools cost money, so many children simply never get any education. Kids to Kids provides three hot meals for fifty children every day, ages 6 to 16, as well as an

elementary education, social services and spiritual guidance. Kids to Kids is one example of dozens of ministries you support when you give to the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

Starting at the end of April, CBF of SC will have missionaries in the poorest part of South Carolina doing something similar to what Sam and Melody are doing in Kenya. We don't know yet exactly what form the ministry will take. Bill Stanfield and Evelyn Oliviera (yes, they are married!) will begin their ministry in Charleston/North Charleston, by getting to know the people there, by discovering what is already being done, and, of course, what is being left undone. Where there are poor people, especially poor children, there is always need.

May God bless and honor our CBF ministries in Kenya and in Charleston.



Melody Harrell, CBF Missionary and Evans Litala, Head Teacher at Kids to Kids, where children from a Nairobi slum attend school and are provided three meals each week day. They are standing in front of a classroom building erected by the Royal (English) Air Force, a reminder of how CBF partners with others. The worker in the top right photo is laying stone for a new building in the Baptist Children's Center orphanage in Kenya. Some of the residents are pictured in the photo, bottom right. It costs about \$250 each year to support one child.



**Cooperative Baptist Fellowship
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Worship
planner Sam
Coates from
Pelham Road
Baptist Church
in Greenville,



and Bob Shrum, pastor of Oakland
Baptist Church in Rock Hill, the host for
the 2002 SC/CBF General Assembly.
Kershaw native Bill Coates, pastor of FBC
Gainesville, GA, was the worship speaker.

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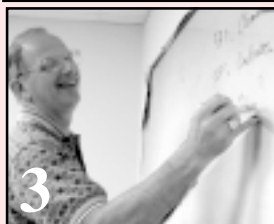
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**2002
GENERAL
ASSEMBLY**

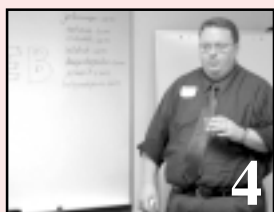
1. Phillip Wright and other members of the Oakland choir joined with the Rock Hill Ecumenical Choir to open worship on Friday night. 2. The Celebration Singers from Boulevard in Anderson. 3. Jack Couch, pastor of Clearview Church in Anderson, led the Region 8 break-out session. 4. Allen Thomason of Chesterfield Baptist Church, led a break-out session on using the Internet. 5. Sammy Verhaeghe, General Secretary of the Belgium Baptist Union. 6. Jamella Lee and Amanda Stiles, members of the Dowel Rod Ministry at Pelham Road.



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