

# FELLOWSHIP NEWS

COOPERATIVE BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP OF SOUTH CAROLINA



MAY 2003

SAM COATES

A pianist, soloist, and harpist, Sam earned an Associate Arts in Music degree from North Greenville College in 1976; a Bachelor of Music from Mars Hill College in 1978; and a Master of Divinity in Religious Education from Southern Seminary in 1981.

He has served on the staffs of First Baptist Church, Kingstree; Berea First Baptist Church; Greenville; First Baptist Church, Duncan; and at Pelham Road Baptist Church for the past six years.

He was a summer missionary to Barbados and has done volunteer missions in Haiti, Puerto Rico, England, Grenada, Korea and many parts of the Eastern United States. He and his wife Lucy Patterson are parents of William, 18; Patterson, 16, and Jack, 7.

"Mostly I'm a CBFer because CBF embodies the word Cooperative and Baptist," Sam said. "They are inclusive and graceful in their approach to ministry."



He describes himself as a worship designer. Others might call him a worship planner. Whatever the word, W. Sam Coates III is an expert at it.

Sam is the Associate Minister at Pelham Road Baptist Church in Greenville, and his skill at designing meaningful worship services has gained him national attention.

For the past year, he has been busy serving as the Music and Worship Coordinator for the General Assembly Steering Committee planning the national assembly in Charlotte, NC, **June 26-28.**

His specific job — make that jobs — is to coordinate the music and worship that will support the plenary session program, to enlist instrumentalists, choral groups, and soloists; to coordinate the leasing of musical instruments; to work with the technical and production needs

**SAM COATES WILL BE MUCH IN EVIDENCE  
AT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN CHARLOTTE, NOT  
ON THE PLATFORM BUT BEHIND THE SCENES AS**

## THE WORSHIP DESIGNER

related to music and worship; and to work with local arrangements in planning the communion service.

All this comes on top of the effort he just finished in designing the worship services for the SC/CBF General Assembly held in Beaufort April 25-26, and serving as worship coordinator for the Upstate CBF meeting with Keith Parks April 12-13.

"In church life my favorite ministry is designing worship services," Sam said. "After years of designing worship, I've learned that music ministry is similar to running a cafeteria. It takes a variety of food to meet everyone's tastes. The same is true of worship. Our church ministers to children, youth, young adults, median

adults, and senior adults. They all listen to different radio stations. I like to design worship that speaks to the hearts of every worshipper."

"Regardless of the music style," Sam said, "the most important element is sincerity. As a worship designer and leader, I have to worship and be prepared to worship. Performances come across as performances. Worship must come from the heart."

That's why Sam, even though he carefully plans all worship services for which he is responsible, is open to change. "I love to be surprised in worship," he said. "Real worship can't be

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When I was in grammar school, one of the worst curses you could call down on someone went something like this: "Last one to the baseball field is a rotten egg." Wow! Gross! A rotten egg!

Who decided that a rotten egg was the ultimate pre-adolescent denunciation? Why not a rotten apple? Or banana? Or a piece of shrimp? Or moldy cheese? Being accused of rotten egginess was a cultural curse in the 1950's, valued by little kids as the biblical curse.

In some circles, the words "moderate" and "liberal" have taken on the connotation of a curse: "She's a moderate politician," or, "He goes to a liberal church." Is that inherently biblical? The Bible condemn people described by those two words? The authority to sinuate

moderation or liberalism as cultural curses is not biblical curses. Sometimes these words are clearly unchristian cultural motives: to beat somebody with a theological argument, to further a personal agenda, to win an argument, to go to that church, to beat liberals." Slam. Dunk. End of discussion.

In Samuel 2:1-2, David loses his temper. That is not a good thing to lose. Temperate is a good thing. Intemperance costs people jobs. Intemperance costs people friends. It costs lives. *I suppose intemperance has saved more people to hell than temperance.*

A few years ago, in a Baptist publication the editor had written a review of a book commending it, saying that if a reader wanted an overview of the conservative political position, this was a good way to get it. I wrote him a note asking why a

Christian would want a conservative position. Why would I want a biblical position? I received a angry and hateful response. Maybe I should have said,

The Bible verse that I was demeaning is Revelation 3:16. Now you know that you are neither moderate nor liberal. I wish you would be one of the other! So, you are lukewarm. Neither hot nor cold. You are about to spit you out of my mouth."



By Marion Aldridge, Coordinator of SC/CBF

### Coordinator's Column Is there anything wrong with being moderate?

about moderation. I had clearly commented in Philippians 4:5: "Moderation in all things." Moderation is what boats could not sail safely without the winds. See Acts 27: 13. Moderation is good in driving. If you overreact to avoid a collision, you might steer into a worse direction. The goal is to moderate or to understand, but tempering the car moderately, correctly, is to stay down the center of the lane. People who drive

immoderately, veering between extremes, and I am glad.

Being obsessive-compulsive can be a clue to a mental disorder, not to spiritual health. Someone who is excessive in all they do, who has to do everything perfectly, is not spiritually mature but may be mentally unbalanced.

Titus also commends restraint against excess, "Teach the people to be temperate." (Titus 2:12) It does as well: "The overbearing... temperate"

Is there anything wrong with being in the middle of God's will?

God save us from extremists, from fanatics, from those who are from the inflexible, from the spiritually lazy. It is evident that they already know what makes those folks make. They are the strongest words of the Bible to the end, it is smug self-satisfaction. It is uncaring, self-righteous conceit.

This is not a text about moderation. It is clearly about moderation. Philippians 4:5: "Moderation in all things." Moderation is what boats could not sail safely without the winds. See Acts 27: 13. Moderation is good in driving. If you overreact to avoid a collision, you might steer into a worse direction. The goal is to moderate or to understand, but tempering the car moderately, correctly, is to stay down the center of the lane. People who drive immoderately, veering between extremes, and I am glad.

Lukewarmness is not about moderate doctrine. It is about lazy living.

People are saying bad things....

Marion Aldridge and Ben McDade will be leading a breakout session at the national General Assembly in Charlotte with the title, "People in my Church are saying bad things about CBF. How do I respond?" The goal is to help laity and clergy have theologically and ethically sound replies to these traps that are set by those who wish to do CBF harm. The above article is a sample of dozens of helps that will be given out during that breakout to assist you in responding to these plots and snares which are set to entrap CBF and its members. If you want to see and hear what is happening in CBF, and not merely react to what others may say about CBF, attend the General Assembly.

## BREAKOUT IN CHARLOTTE



Last week in my English class for international students at Midlands Technical College, the assignment was to tell about an event that changed your life. This may be a good exercise for all of us Christians from time to time. For me, other than my salvation experience at age eight, the event that most changed my life was the year 1990-1991, when I worked as a missions volunteer teaching English in a school run by a Baptist Church in Wroclaw, Poland.

During that year I came to discover that Baptist churches the world over are much alike. The pastor's wife and I joked about how everyone expected her to sing in the choir and go to all the women's socials just because her husband was the pastor—never mind that she didn't sing and she might prefer working with the youth group instead. I watched with amusement as the church puzzled over how to adapt to contemporary worship, a process made even more challenging because apparently there's some rule that Slavic hymns must be sung in a mournful minor key; they just don't adapt well to synthesizers and steel drums.

I learned that sometimes things were different in Poland, too. Where evangelicals are a tiny minority — and when Baptists and Pentecostals are considered by many to be cult groups — evangelical congregations have to support each other in order to survive. I was struck by this when the pastor of another local congregation began to

teach a health-and-wealth prosperity gospel, influenced by one of the movements that had come to Poland from the West after the fall of communism. Instead of denouncing him from the pulpit for drifting into theological

## Lessons from a Polish Church



### MODERATOR'S MESSAGE

By Laurie Berry, Columbia

error, my pastor and other evangelical ministers in the city watched and prayed for their fellow Christian leader for many months. Then a few of them went and "explained to him the way of God more adequately" (Acts 18:26). They continued to meet with him and work on the relationship until he realized his error and fellowship was restored. The pastors knew that they couldn't afford to lose a brother in Christ; I wondered what American church life would be like if this were always the case.

I went to Poland to teach and evangelize, and by God's grace managed to do some of both. But I learned much more from my Polish brothers and sisters than I taught, and this has made all the difference in my life since then.

You know what I like about CBFofSC? We haven't stopped learning. With

Butch and Nell Green in Brussels, we are learning from Arabic-speaking Christians how to bear witness for Christ in a post-9/11 world. From our brothers and sisters in the Belgium Baptist Union, we can learn how to witness to a culture that considers itself post-Christian.

In Allendale, SC, we are learning from Christ Central Ministries how a Christian ministry team can be truly integrated along racial and class lines, and can reach out to their neighbors in a language they understand.

In Charleston, Bill Stanfield and Evelyn Oliveira are learning with St. Matthew Baptist how a local neighborhood can transform itself for Christ.

And our new partnerships with African-American churches in South Carolina provide SC/CBF with new opportunities to learn, because African-American Baptists and Anglo-Baptists have walked along different paths over the past centuries. We have evolved different responses to some of the same challenges that face all congregations; we have also faced some challenges that are very different. God has used these different experiences to equip us for ministry, and we have much to learn from each other.

As your moderator for 2003-2004, I look forward to a year of learning with you as we in CBF seek to fulfill our God-given mission.

✦ *Laurie Berry, a member of Kathwood Baptist Church in Columbia, was elected moderator of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of South Carolina on April 25.*



## Bulletin insert available

The bulletin insert that is included in this issue of South Carolina Fellowship News promoting the national General Assembly at the end of June is available in quantity for your church's use. To order, call the SC/CBF Resource Center at 803.779.1888 or e-mail [cbfosc@bellsouth.net](mailto:cbfosc@bellsouth.net).



## Archives endowment named for 'Loulie'

The "Loulie Latimer Owens Endowment for University Archives" has been established at Furman University.

A. V. Huff Jr., Vice-President for Academic Affairs and Dean at Furman, made the announcement April 8 at the spring meeting of the South Carolina Baptist Historical Society.

A grant of \$100,000 from the Duke Endowment for university archives made this possible, Huff said.

Loulie, a Baptist historian and writer, was the first Special Collections Librarian at Furman. She set up the Baptist Historical Collection and archives in the 1960s, and was also a co-founder of the South Carolina Baptist Historical Society in 1948.

Huff said it was most appropriate that the announcement be made at a SCBHS meeting because of Loulie's involvement in the Society.

The Baptist Historical Society held its meeting on the Furman campus as part of Furman's Founders Week activities. In conjunction with the Chaplain's office, the Society sponsored the visit of Martin Marty to Furman. Marty addressed a record 125 participants in a morning ministers workshop on the topic "America's Changing Religious Landscape."

The Baptist Historical Collection hosted an open house in the afternoon at which an exhibit on the work of Loulie Latimer Owens was featured.

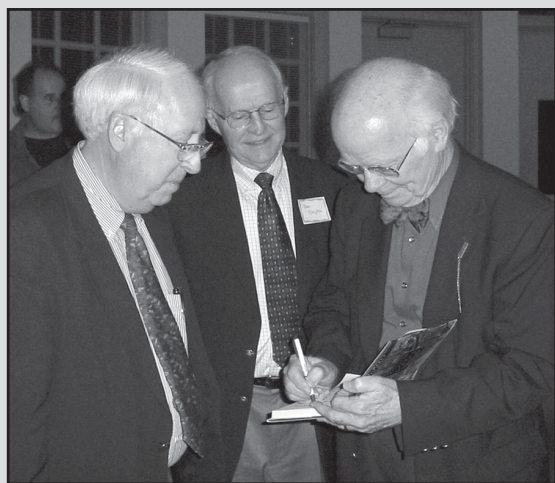


LOULIE LATTIMER OWENS PETTIGREW

Later Glen Clayton, Curator of the South Carolina Baptist Historical Collection, spoke on "The Future of the Baptist Historical Collection."

In the evening, Marty lectured on the topic "The American Religious Landscape: Baptists and Other Believers."

Marty is professor emeritus at the University of Chicago where he taught for 35 years. He has served on the staff of the *Christian Century* since 1956 and writes a weekly e-mail column, "Sightings." He is an ordained Lutheran minister and served for a decade as a parish minister.



### Marty was speaker for Historical Society

Martin Marty, right, autographs a book for John Platt, left, the director of missions for Columbia Metro Association, while Glen Clayton, Curator of the South Carolina Baptist Historical Collection at Furman, looks on.

## E.C. Watson, Edgar McKnight publish new books

Two prominent and long-time Baptists in South Carolina have recently published new books.

E. C. Watson Jr. has written *Call me Jeremiah!* E. C. is a member of the SC/CBF Coordinating Council who for 20 years was on the staff of the South Carolina Baptist Convention.



E.C. Watson

The book looks through the spiritual eyes of the prophet Jeremiah in this memoir of a Baptist who has spent about 50 years in ministry and was moderator of the 1991

formative meeting of SC/CBF.

In viewing the chain of events in the evolution of the SBC, he asks three questions that he feels people must ask as they process their personal response to any kind of crisis — Who Am I? Where is God? What Shall We Do?

The book is available from the SC/CBF office for \$6 plus shipping.

*Reading the Bible Today: A 21st Century Appreciation of Scripture* by Edgar V. McKnight advocates a multifaceted approach to the Bible that distinguishes between the truth of the Bible and its cultural wrappings.

"Simply stated," McKnight said, "the

question is whether clear and unquestioned biblical statements concerning the subordination of women constitute contemporary articles of faith or reflect

the repulsive and contingent patriarchal practices of the ancient world."

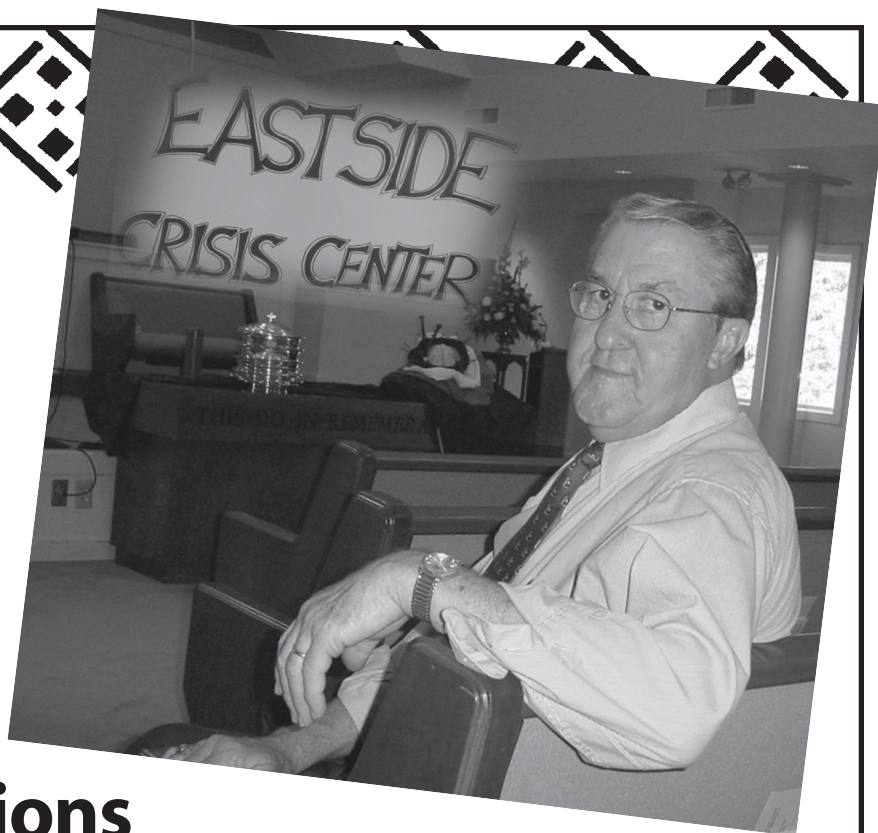


Edgar McKnight

McKnight is research professor and Professor of Religion Emeritus at Furman University where

he taught religion and classical languages for over four decades. He is author of more than a dozen books in the area of biblical interpretation.

Spencer LeGrand saw a need among the community his church served and set about meeting that need. For that effort, vision, and dedication begun more than 25 years ago, he is SC/CBF's 2003



## Pioneer in Missions

Spencer LeGrand uses the word retired when he talks about his ministry. So maybe he doesn't preach every Sunday anymore but retired he is not.

Spencer is the recipient of the 2003 Pioneer in Missions Award from the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of South Carolina. He received the recognition April 13 at a regional meeting of SC/CBF churches in Greenville for his work in establishing the Eastside Crisis Center.

Spencer retired in 1999 after serving as pastor of East Park Baptist Church in Greenville for 23 years. Early in his ministry at the church, he recognized he was serving in a community in need. "People were coming to the church asking for help," he said. "So we started operating out of a closet in the fellowship hall."

Thus was born the Eastside Crisis Center. East Park operated its food, clothing and financial help center on its own until 1987 when the Greenville Baptist Association got other churches involved. Since then, as many as 200

families a month have been helped.

Spencer still volunteers there regularly and is the person primarily responsible for buying the food from the community food bank.

The Pioneer in Missions award is given to a woman or man who has exemplified the prophetic, servant-like, and compassionate qualities of a Christian missionary. John Roy, pastor of Pelham Road Baptist Church in Greenville where Spencer is now a member, presented this year's award.

"The church he served was having a great number of knocks on the door from the needy. With only a small food closet and a \$100 budget for benevolence, Spencer LeGrand could not turn the least of them away," John said.

"The Eastside Crisis Center has become a place of love, redemption, and ministry," John said. "Almost 30 years have passed since the door was first opened, and Spencer has done it all. He ran the center as well as pastored the church for many years. Church members supplied the food, and Spencer supplied the labor. He

would help 30 families a month with the center's resources. The word got out that ministry and compassion were being shared at the Eastside Crisis Center at East Park Church. The need grew and in February 1988 the center saw over 256 families. Greenville churches were now sending food and financial support but Spencer was still the missionary."

"The story of the Eastside Crisis Center deserves more time than I can provide this evening," John said in presenting the award. "Yet this story could not be told without a pioneer missionary like Spencer LeGrand. Without someone to recognize the needs of the people, to be a prophet to the congregation, and lead with compassion to unite the two, the Eastside Crisis Center would never have been born."

From Columbia, Spencer is a graduate of Furman University and Southeastern Seminary. He was pastor of one church in Virginia and three in North Carolina before coming to East Park in 1976.




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**National General Assembly  
June 26-28  
Charlotte**

## A Baptist by birth — and a Baptist by choice

 Sam Coates has been a Baptist since birth. "I was on the cradle roll of First Baptist Church, Taylors, my home church," Sam said. "As a child I never missed Training Union where we were taught what it means to be Baptist. We learned about the priesthood of believers and the autonomy of the local church. I grew up going to Foreign Missions Week at Ridgecrest, where I learned God could call anyone to missions, even women. I grew up going on choir tours every summer where I learned how Baptists cooperate to get missions done. I am Baptist by birth and raising, and now I'm Baptist by choice."

"As an adult, I choose to be a CBF Baptist," he said. "I first joined CBF as a matter of ethics. In seminary I saw the way the new SBC leaders were treating our president, faculty, Keith Parks, Carolyn Weatherford, Baptist editors and anyone who

didn't agree with them. I first joined CBF as a matter of integrity as a Christian and as a Baptist. I stayed with CBF because of principles. I'm old enough to know what it used to mean to be Southern Baptist, and CBF holds true to those historic Baptist principles which I learned as a youth."

"I continue to volunteer my time for CBF because of the way they do missions," he said. "Growing up Southern Baptist gave me a great love for missions. CBF is a true missions organization. I especially like the way CBF works with local people to reach the least reached people groups of the world. We partner with individuals, churches, and other groups to be the presence of Christ in the world."



Sam Coates

## Designing worship means being open to surprises

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fenced into a design. As a worship leader, I have to be aware of the needs of the congregation and be willing to add or subtract an element. Sometimes the spirit changes the direction of the service, and an added chorus, word of testimony or a verse sung acapella is needed."

In designing the worship services for Charlotte, Sam has worked with Bruce Wilson, pastor of West Main Baptist Church in Danville, VA. "He has such a heart for worship and we've enjoyed

serving CBF as worship planners," Sam said. "There is such freedom in planning worship for CBF. We can use a variety of music styles. We are free to employ both women and men, different races and ages."

The theme this year is *Being the Presence of Christ*. "We couldn't think of anyone who better models the presence of Christ in a practical word and witness than Tony Campolo," Sam said. "He not only talks the talk with great enthusiasm, but walks the walk with even more

enthusiasm."

"We are making a major push to involve youth in the worship services so they can hear Tony speak," Sam said. "Youth choirs, readers, and theme interpreters will help lead us in worship. Tony has a way of motivating young people to surrender not only their hearts, but their careers to Jesus. We hope that all youth ministers will make it their summer priority to get their youth group to this event."