

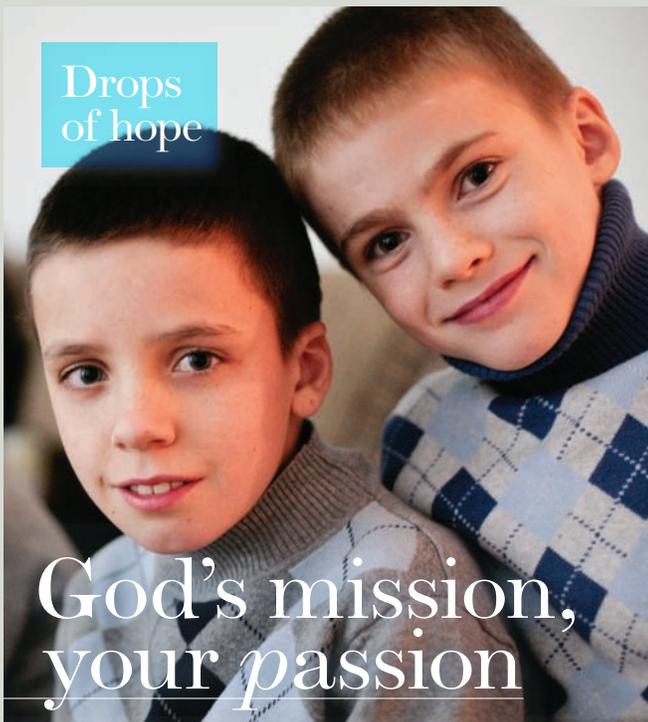
December 2013

LINK

News and Stories from TN Cooperative Baptist Fellowship



CBF Offering for Global Missions



What is the CBF Offering for Global Missions?

Simply stated, the CBF Offering is the primary giving channel for supporting Cooperative Baptist Fellowship field personnel and their ministries. It is a year-round campaign through which churches and individuals are invited to participate in God's mission by making a financial gift.

What does the CBF Offering do?

The CBF Offering supports all CBF field personnel, including those who also receive funding from other sources. For many CBF field personnel, the CBF Offering pays their salary, benefits, and ministry and operating expenses. All field personnel receive support from the CBF Offering for health insurance, technology, travel, and member care and wellness services.

Why is the CBF Offering important?

The CBF Offering for Global Missions is not "over and above" the CBF Global Missions budget. It is the PRIMARY way field personnel are funded. Field personnel serving among the most neglected depend on

CBF Offering gifts from you and your church. This year's national goal of \$4.8 million is the amount needed to support existing field personnel. When you give, and when you encourage others in your congregation to give, it makes a difference in their lives and in CBF's plans for future field personnel.

Why invest in Global Missions now?

Every day, thousands of children spend their time on the streets of Kiev, Ukraine. These children eat most of their meals from a dumpster and sniff glue so they don't have to think about how cold, hungry or lonely they are. When Cooperative Baptist Fellowship field personnel Gennady and Mina Podgaisky moved to Ukraine in 2002 to start their ministry, they were overwhelmed and worried for the street children of Kiev, but they were also determined to turn their tears into drops of hope. More than a decade later these "drops" have rippled out among Kiev's orphaned, abandoned, and runaway children through life-changing ministries — three foster care homes, transformational teaching tools, powerful partnerships, and other ways of sharing Christ's love.

You can help CBF mission work in Kiev and around the globe. You can be the compassionate presence of Christ by giving to the CBF Offering for Global Missions. While the offering is promoted throughout the year, Christmas is a wonderful time to promote the good work of CBF field personnel. Your gifts enable you and members of your congregation to participate in God's mission and make a difference in people's lives.



The TCBF staff and members of the Coordinating Council wish you much joy and peace as you prepare for and celebrate the birth of Christ. May you experience much contentment and hope in the New Year!

Thank YOU!

As we come to the close of another calendar year, we express our gratitude to all congregations and individuals who supported the work of Tennessee CBF and the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship in 2013. Your investment in our mission and ministry enabled us to impact the Kingdom in powerful ways! Please read the powerful stories in this newsletter, and check out the year-in-review to be posted on our website in December. It contains highlights of what was accomplished because of your faithful gifts to our budget and the state missions offering.

Thanks again for your support in 2013! We anticipate meaningful and faithful partnerships and collaborations in 2014, and we're excited about all we will accomplish together!

Moderator Report to TCBF

by Bill McConnell



I am by nature an optimist and viewing the progress underway with Tennessee CBF and National CBF gives much cause for optimism. Terry Maples and those in this state who have been diligently working to improve the CBF network have done a great work in the past few years. There are a number of initiatives underway within the Decatur offices of National CBF that will have a very positive impact on the work of the Fellowship. We have several new faces in important positions, with more to come.

We had great leadership by Daniel Vestal over the past decade or so. Suzii Paynter is carrying that tradition forward and is adding her unique stamp to the work. We should be very proud of our Executive Coordinator.

The new governance plan from the 2012 Task Force is being implemented this year and this is one of my primary projects and responsibilities. We have a fully staffed Governing Board and Nominating Committee with partially staffed Missions Council and Ministries Council. Every operating group will be at full strength by the next General Assembly in Atlanta in June 2014. Tennessee is represented in this scheme by Susan Fendley (Central-Bearden) on the Governing Board and Mike Smith (Central-Fountain City) on the Nominating Committee.

Administration is all well and good but the true work of the Fellowship comes in our missions efforts here and around the globe. That work has not slowed in the least, and we now have an Advisory Search Committee at work looking for the next Coordinator for Global Missions. Be in prayer for that effort.

Fellowship Baptists are on the move. Keep praying and working and plan on joining us in Atlanta next June 26-27 for the CBF General Assembly.

NOTE: Bill McConnell serves as Moderator of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship this year. He is a good friend of TCBF and an active member of Central Baptist Church of Bearden in Knoxville.

Thank You from Student.Go Missioner

by Kelly Krell

Hello! I would like to thank Tennessee CBF from the bottom of my heart for your support of my summer internship with Student.Go. It has been an incredible experience and I've learned a lot.

This summer, I worked with Crescent Hills Baptist Church in Louisville, Kentucky. The church does extensive ministry to Karen and Chin refugee families from Burma, as well as other recent immigrants. I worked in their children's ministry, serving mostly with Karen children. We also worked with Nepali and American kids. We hosted a campout, vacation Bible school, a five-week Academic Academy, as well as a trip to PassportKids camp. It was a lot of work, but it was a lot of fun, too. I enjoyed getting to know the children and learning with them.



My favorite part of the summer was the Academic Academy. I helped teach the first and second grade class. My students were bright, curious and hard-working. Math and reading weren't easy things for them, but they persevered. They love music, so we sang our way through the days, learning the months of the year, days of the week, and additional facts. We also sang just for fun or to get their wiggles out. We also read and wrote together and made up endless math stories.

My students have big dreams. They want to be zookeepers, pilots, florists, and teachers. I remember one lunchtime conversation with a first grader named Dah Eh. We had been talking about his oldest sister, a college student. "Are you going to go to college?" I asked him. He burst out laughing. "No, Miss Kelly. I'm too little." "Well, what about when you grow up?" He scrunched up his little face and thought for a minute. Then he asked, "Do you have to go to college to be a Ninja?" I couldn't help myself, I laughed, too!

Conversations like this punctuated my days. They reminded me how important it is to talk with children and to listen to what they have to say. All children need adults in their lives who sincerely care about them and their problems, hopes, and dreams.



An exciting part of the Academic Academy was the field trips. We went to a farm, an Independence Day festival, a planetarium, and an indoor trampoline park. The children were exposed to things they might not otherwise have seen. They had questions about everything, and they learned everywhere we went. When we arrived at Huber's Farm, our first field trip, the children were wide-eyed. Many of them had never seen a live goat, donkey, cow or horse (except on television), much less had the chance to pet one. They also got to pick strawberries, mine for "gold," and travel through a bamboo maze. It was a great experience for all of us.

I am very blessed to have had the opportunity to serve at Crescent Hill this summer. I learned a lot that will help me in my career as an elementary school teacher. More importantly, I saw God at work through these little children. As I talked and laughed and prayed with them, I saw God's love and protection in their lives. I'm very grateful for the support and prayers that made this summer possible, and I'd like to thank you for being a part of it. God bless!

NOTE: Kelly was one of three college students TCBF supported this summer through CBF's Student.Go.

Update from Amy Beth Willis

I collected a rock in the Tucson sector of the Sonoran desert, near the small town of Arivaca. I was out in the desert with Sandra, a member of Southside Presbyterian, who is also a part of the Samaritans, a humanitarian aide organization that provides life-saving water and food for migrants crossing the desert. I got the full tour, learning about the harsh realities of the desert. We were collecting rocks for Migrant Sunday at Southside Presbyterian, the annual commemoration of those who died in the desert.

I was tasked with writing the names, or “desconocido/a,” (unknown in Spanish) on the rocks we collected. It was a deeply moving experience. I sat outside my house with a bucket, a rag, and a hose, carefully cleaning each rock. I felt the amount of time I took with each rock was a small token of respect I could give to those who lost their lives in the desert.

When I first sat down to label the rocks, the first name I saw was Mireya (pronounced: Mee-ray-yah). Then, I saw her age: twenty-two. She was 22 when she died in the desert. It’s hard to describe how I felt when I saw that number. It was like a stab in the gut. I am 22.

I wondered about what compelled her to leave her homeland, to leave her family, to risk her life crossing the desert. I wondered what kind of shoes she was wearing. (Hundreds of pairs of shoes are found and collected from the desert). I asked myself who she left behind.

Indeed, it is one thing to study immigration, to study what causes migration and reflect on the desperation that drives people here. It is another to witness it in such a personal way, to look at a rock that represents a real person who died. A person named Mireya.

As I reflected, I couldn’t help but marvel at my privilege, my education, the choices and mobility I have. I thought about my family and the luck we have to be able to have consistent work and food on the table. In all likelihood, Mireyah didn’t have the choices I do. If she did, why would she have risked it all?



So, on Migrant Sunday, we commemorated all 182 people who died since last October. The majority of these people are indeed unknown because the desert devours the bodies very quickly. But *Mireya*, *Galindo*, *Oscar*, *Elsa*, and *Rigoberto* (all names of people whose bodies were identified) connect me to the unknowns, to the statistic. Their names connect me to the torturous deaths, less than 50 miles away from where I live. In my experience here in Tucson, I have seen the other side of those who have crossed through the desert. I know many who made the journey successfully. They are the lucky ones.

Southside Presbyterian is unique in sharing space with a day laborers’ center. The focus is on creating a system of employer-employee accountability for men that otherwise may be denied a fair wage, or any wage at all for their hard labor. Lately, I have been casually asking them how they got to the U.S. More often than not, I hear “por el desierto, through the desert.” It seems so nonchalant when they say it. But, then, I remember the landscape of the desert. The scorching sun. I remember Mireya.

All of this begs the question—what are we doing to honor her? And the other 182 people? When people do make it through the desert, how do we treat them? How do we treat the stranger in our society? As a person of privilege and more importantly as a Christian, how

can I best honor Mireya, a woman who could be *mi companera*, my friend? A woman who could have had a full and long life like me, but instead died a cruel, lonely death. In Matthew 25, Jesus commands us to care for the stranger because Jesus is found in the face of the stranger. There is no greater stranger in U.S. society than the undocumented immigrant.

CONTINUE READING ON PAGE 8

Thank You from Refilwe

by Caroline Smith, CBF Field Personnel

To our Friends at Tennessee CBF:

We want to thank you for your generous contribution toward our Refilwe Youth Mission Trip. Thanks to your generosity, Josh, Bella and I had the opportunity to lead the eight Refilwe youth on a mission trip to work with our ministry partners in Kwa Zulu Natal. CBF field personnel Mark and Sara Williams graciously hosted our team as we worked in the rural Emmaus village alongside the local church.

We left Refilwe on Sunday morning, September 22, arriving in Winterton late that afternoon. We were accommodated at a nice guest house where all of our meals were catered. Monday through Thursday we went to the church in the village where we worked in the garden, provided activities and crafts for the preschool children, painted the new eco toilet stalls, put together play equipment, cleaned the church, leveled the playing fields where each afternoon the youth played netball and soccer with the local youth. We even got to take soccer balls for all of the kids and youth that we worked with. The youth really enjoyed getting to give a gift to the kids!

Each evening we had time for debriefing, discussion, and devotion. The youth were very reflective and thoughtful about their experiences. We talked about the local culture and how different village life is from the city. We talked about how they saw short term mission teams that come to Refilwe and how this experience impacted their understanding. We prayed together, laughed together and encouraged each other. I was so impressed at the way they uplifted each other and complimented one another. Of course, there were some struggles but they worked through them well!

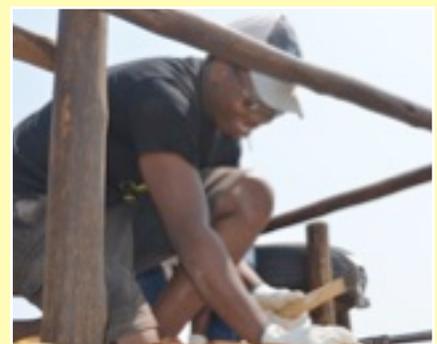
On Friday we experienced God's creation in an amazing way as we hiked and picnicked at the Royal Natal National Park in the Drakensburg Mountains. Everyone really enjoyed the outing, even soaking themselves in the waterfalls! On Saturday we loaded up in our vehicles and returned to Refilwe. I asked if one or two of the youth would be willing to share about their experience at our Agape Meal on Wednesday night and they all wanted to share. So we went around and each person shared.

Back home, the entire Refilwe community heard from the youth about their experiences during a dinner. We also showed pictures from our mission project.

We are all so grateful for your support in this ministry!

NOTE: Three churches from Tennessee participate in the South Africa Network - First Chattanooga, First Knoxville, and Second Memphis. See Stephen Cook's article in the September newsletter for details. TCBF's gift supported this partnership.

Pictures from Refilwe mission project!



Less Is More...Well, Sometimes!

by Terry Maples, Field Coordinator



I find myself often using this expression: “Less is more!” I’m sure you can think of many situations where you would agree with this statement. Here are some examples:

- When you are with someone who is grieving the loss of a loved one, fewer words are often preferable and more comforting.
- When it comes to the busyness of life, less is more. We must resist the temptation to fill our days with activity. This is especially true during the Season of Advent.
- When it comes to shopping (at least for me), less is always more. I get what I need and move on! My goal is to resist the consumer culture, i.e. the latest-and-greatest must-haves for this year.

· When you are in conflict with your spouse or a good friend, most often saying less is more. In the heat of anger, use words sparingly!

- When your parents are “lecturing” you, less is always more!
- When giving directions to a specific location, often less is more. Too many details and the person gets confused or lost.
- When you are discussing menu items with the waiter in an ethnic restaurant where English is spoken as a second language, less is more. Too many words and who knows what you will end up with for lunch!
- When filling your plate at a church pot-luck dinner, less is more. Too much on your plate or too many trips to the dessert table and you will probably feel bad the rest of the day.
- When it comes to hair, less is more. I can speak from experience here. Less hair is a lot less work and effort. My investment of time and energy focused on my hair shrinks daily!

As I have reflected upon this expression, I have come to realize LESS IS MORE does not ring true in all situations. Here are some prime examples:

- When expressing love for and spending time with those closest to us, less is not more. Those we love need to hear our words of affirmation, encouragement and support frequently. They need quality time with us. Withholding our presence or vital feedback from our loved ones could have dire consequences.
- When it comes to investing time in our faith development, less is definitely not more. God desires an intimate relationship with us. Quality of relationship is directly tied to the quantity of time invested. The more time we spend nurturing our faith, the more connected we feel to God.
- When showing care and concern to the poor and needy in our communities, less is not more. Jesus clearly teaches us we show our love for God by how we serve. He said when we serve *the least of these* we serve him. Serving the needy seems natural during the Christmas season of giving. Having our eyes open to see needs at Christmas is commendable, but Jesus expects this kind of ministry and justice throughout the year!

I could go on with examples, but when it comes to words, less is often more! So, I close by articulating one more significant place where less is NOT more. **Less support of CBF’s global mission enterprise is NOT more.** Field personnel who feel called by God to serve among the most neglected deserve our generous support. The more we give to the Offering for Global Missions the less time field personnel must spend raising funds for their ministry and the more time they can minister to the human needs around them.

As you prepare to celebrate God’s incalculable Gift to humankind, remember your gifts to global missions make a lasting difference in people’s lives. In this case, more definitely is more!



Tennessee CBF General Assembly

April 11-12, 2014

Memphis, Tennessee

Theme: Be. Love. Serve.



Make plans NOW to participate in this unique General Assembly experience. You will learn through thematic presentations on Friday evening, engage in mission projects on Saturday morning, share fellowship and reflect on your experiences during lunch, then participate in worship and communion. Registration begins January 1, 2014.

Friday, April 11 – Trinity Baptist Church, Cordova

5:30 PM – Dinner (by reservation)

7:00 PM – Time of Celebration

7:15 PM – Thematic Presentations:

BE – Ray Higgins, Coordinator, CBF Arkansas

LOVE – Suzii Paynter, CBF Executive Coordinator

SERVE – Catherine Bahn & Mollie Palmer, Co-Directors,
Together for Hope, Helena, AR

8:30 PM – Reception for Suzii Paynter

Saturday, April 12 – Second Baptist Church, Memphis

8:00 AM – Gather, Fellowship, & Worship at Second Baptist Church

9:00 AM – Depart for Mission Projects around Memphis

Noon – Return to Second Baptist Church

Noon – Lunch and Reflection on Mission Engagement

1:00 PM – Closing Worship and Communion (around tables)

Important Information about General Assembly Mission Projects

We are excited to include mission engagement opportunities as part of the TCBF General Assembly this year. Service projects are planned for ages 5 to 95! Whatever your age, interest, or skills, there is a mission project for YOU. When you register for the General Assembly, you will be prompted to sign up for a mission project. You will be taken to the “volunteer management page” to select a project that is right for you.

Our goal is to have 350 people on mission around Memphis on Saturday, April 12. Examples of mission projects at the church building include: prayer and encouragement, providing childcare so others can serve, or assembling supplies to meet human needs. We also invite you to consider participating in a mission project away from the church building: home repair, community clean-up projects, working in community gardens, and other community service/mission projects. Join us!

We are grateful to folks from First Baptist, Second Baptist, and Trinity Cordova who are planning and coordinating this day of mission in conjunction with the TCBF General Assembly.



Tennessee
Cooperative Baptist Fellowship

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Address Service Requested

End of Year Giving

Please use the enclosed envelope to invest in the ministries of Tennessee CBF and National CBF. You may also use the envelope for your gift to the CBF Offering for Global Missions. Thanks in advance!

Betty Galloway Advocacy for Women in Ministry

At the General Assembly each year TCBF gives this award to a person, church, or organization that excels in promoting and advocating for women in places of ministry. Contact Terry Maples at tmaples@tncbf.org with your nomination for this award. Nominations are due on February 1, 2014.

Ircel Harrison Theological Scholarship

Tennessee CBF grants at least one \$1,000 theological scholarship at the General Assembly each year. To apply for this scholarship, applicants must: 1) have Tennessee connections, 2) be a member of a CBF-affiliated congregation or demonstrate support to state or national CBF ministries, and 3) be entering or currently enrolled in a master's or doctoral program. Go to tncbf.org and follow the instructions. Applications are due February 1, 2014.

Continued from page 4 - Amy Beth Willis

Today, I challenge you to learn more about immigration. To study all the angles. No matter your political background or views, think about the other side. We all have a lot to learn. I challenge you to learn about our national, state, and local policies that affect immigrants. I challenge you to get to know immigrants in your own community (no matter where they are from or how they got there). Most of all, I challenge you to never forget Mireya. And the 2,500 + who have died in our desert over the past 20 years as a result of our nation's border policies. May their struggle not be in vain.

NOTE: TCBF is supporting Amy Beth's year-long mission immersion experience in Tucson, AZ. Amy Beth and her parents, Scott and Vickie Willis, are long-time members of First Baptist Church in Murfreesboro.