

September 2013

LINK

News and Stories from TN Cooperative Baptist Fellowship



TCBF State Missions Offering, 2013 - 2014



Missions is the heartbeat of Tennessee Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. We strive to help churches and individuals in Tennessee engage in missions at home, in the U.S., and around the globe. Each year, TCBF sponsors a state missions offering. We celebrate the fact that over the past decade, congregations and individuals have given over a quarter million dollars to meet tangible human needs through this offering.

In April, the TCBF General Assembly approved a recommendation to re-name our state missions offering in honor of Elizabeth Richards, retired CBF field personnel and member of Trinity Baptist Church (Cordova). Elizabeth served as missionary in the Middle East for 16 years. She was appointed as a Global Service Corps worker in 1996 and was commissioned as a career missionary in 1998. For nine years, Elizabeth served in a traditional health care setting – working in a chest disease hospital serving the Bedouin. Later she worked in a micro-enterprise setting in the Middle East that employed and served the unreached and those marginalized by society, mostly employees disabled or disadvantaged in some way.

Elizabeth's commitment to serve God and others is inspiring. She models well what it means to be Jesus' compassionate presence to the needy. In naming our State Missions Offering for Elizabeth, we commend her sacrificial spirit and communicate our own commitment to serve "the least of these" here at home.

Through the *Elizabeth Richards Missions Offering*, you invest in ministries in Tennessee and beyond (see recipients on page 2).

Please promote the state missions offering any time between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2014. Go to tncbf.org to find promotional materials or contact Brittany Jackson at bjackson@tncbf.org.



TCBF Financial Update Annual Report



Tennessee CBF is pleased to share a strong, positive financial report for the past fiscal year, July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2013. Because of the generous and faithful giving of individuals and congregations, we finished the year with healthy reserves to carry us into this new financial year that started July 1, 2013.

Total Unrestricted Income	\$201,488.97
Total Expenses	\$143,619.05
Transferred to Reserves	\$25,000.00
Amount Carried Forward	\$32,869.92

At the TCBF General Assembly in Chattanooga, those gathered approved a new TCBF budget of \$184,700 for the 2013-2014 fiscal year. If giving trends continue, we should reach this budget goal with reserves available for the following year. Thanks to all who support the mission and ministry of Tennessee CBF!

State Missions Offering 2012 - 2013

We have good news to share regarding gifts to Tennessee Priorities in Mission (state missions offering), July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2013. Thanks to the generosity of congregations and individuals, we surpassed our goal!

TPIM Goal - \$25,000.00
Total Given - \$35,232.65

Our partners benefited greatly from the additional gifts distributed to them!

Recipients of the Elizabeth Richards Missions Offering 2013 - 2014 GOAL \$27,500

Tennessee CBF's *Elizabeth Richards Missions Offering* funds significant mission projects in Tennessee and beyond. Your investment in our state missions offering for 2013-2014 empowers the following ministries:

Congregational Mission Grants - \$12,000

Tennessee CBF encourages congregations to be the "presence of Christ" to needy people in the world. Mission grants provide seed money that enables congregations to engage in meaningful mission projects in their communities or elsewhere. This year, we will award twelve \$1,000 grants.

Samaritan Ministry in Knoxville - \$5,000

The mission of Samaritan Ministry is to be "a beacon of light and hope, by way of Christ, to anyone who suffers from or has family or friends who suffer from HIV/AIDS." Wayne Smith guides this ministry of Central Baptist Church of Bearden.

Neverfail Community Church in Sparta - \$5,000

This congregation serves the Cumberland Plateau of Eastern Middle Tennessee. Many in this area live below the poverty line, and over 40% of the residents are not in the workforce. 33% have no high school diploma or GED. Many in the community are disabled. We support Neverfail's efforts to minister to *the least of these*.

College Student Ministries - \$5,500

A high value for Tennessee CBF is supporting and encouraging the ministry of college students. This money will be used to help college students engage in hands-on ministry experience through CBF ministries like Student.GO.

Our PRIORITIES in MISSION

By Wayne Smith - Director of Samaritan Ministry in Knoxville
A Ministry of Central Baptist Church of Bearden

We recently sent Terry Maples and the Coordinating Council an update about our spending of TCBF funds, specifically the Tennessee Priorities in Missions (TPIM) funds for 2012. We want to always keep our partners informed, and no partner of Samaritan Ministry is more important to us than Tennessee CBF. Ninety-five percent of our work is done right here in Tennessee. We don't engage in international missions.

As you probably know, we serve God's children who happen to live with an HIV diagnosis and need God's touch in their lives. We do this through direct support of several hundred clients, many educational opportunities (teaching about HIV is important), and HIV testing in our community. We are also very proud to be a PARTNER in our community with many, many groups - religious, governmental, and secular - who share our vision for an AIDS free generation!



Samaritan Ministry has been a TCBF partner since 2004 and we have enjoyed and NEEDED this support. We hope the support from TCBF has been a two-way street with our churches benefiting from the existence of our ministry work. Please let us know if we

can serve YOUR congregation.

Since July 1, 2012, we spent just over \$6,400 in TPIM contributions (some funds carried over from the previous fiscal year). Here is what we have done with your generosity:

Client Emergencies: \$3,232.49 - includes rent, utilities, medications, glasses, food

Printing and Supplies: \$1,018.07

Travel: \$74.34 - motel for GA CBF

Office Rent: \$1,375.00 - we will NOT have rent expenses in the current fiscal year!

Domain Name for 1 year: \$170.40

Workshop: \$269.27 - we hosted a Hepatitis C workshop.

Summer Cookout: \$275.00 - tent rental

So, we currently have a balance in our fund of \$79.97, and we are excited what will happen in the future because of gifts to the *Elizabeth Richards Missions Offering!*

Thank you for helping us be the presence of Christ in Tennessee!

You may contact Wayne in Knoxville at smithmw@usit.net or 865-705-1161.



Community Mission Trailer Takes “Maiden Voyage”

King’s Cross Church in Tullahoma took the TCBF Community Mission Trailer on its first mission project the week of June 16. A team of youth and adults from King’s Cross pulled the trailer to East Tennessee to work with Appalachian Outreach. Pictured above is the trailer parked at a work site where a team built a ramp (photo taken by Mike Young).

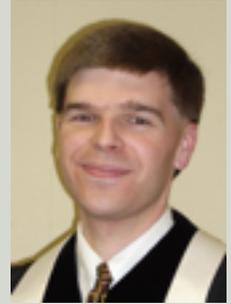
At the state meeting during the CBF General Assembly in Greensboro, Phillip Moody, staff minister at King’s Cross, reported how important the trailer was for the mission project. The open floor space was also utilized for luggage, so the team could drive fewer vehicles. Mike Young and Kal Busman also reported how useful and important the trailer was to the mission project.

Share God’s love by making a difference in your neighborhood or wherever your church is called to serve! Reserve the TCBF mission trailer for a week or weekend of mission projects. The trailer is stocked with tools and awaits your use. Go to tncbf.org to find a listing of tools and supplies in the trailer, the registration form, and the liability form. Call [615.907.8525](tel:615.907.8525) to reserve the trailer and engage in mission action.

A Partnership a Long Time Coming

By Stephen Cook, Senior Pastor
Second Baptist, Memphis

When Second Baptist Church Memphis was preparing to celebrate its 50th anniversary during the year 2012, we unearthed a significant tidbit from our past. Some four decades prior our pastor then and the pastor from Second Baptist Church in Little Rock dreamed together about collaborative mission efforts the two congregations could pursue together. The church archives didn’t have much evidence of anything happening between the two churches over the next 40 years. Now, though, we have started writing a new history.



In September of 2012 a team of 11 Second Memphis members and 13 Second Little Rock members came together for a beautiful mission partnership in South Africa. For several years members of the Little Rock congregation had been supporting the work of CBF field personnel Josh and Caroline Smith and Mark and Sara Williams there. Their pastor approached me and asked if we would be interested in joining in the work. We were in search of a global mission focus that would also translate into local mission engagement here in Memphis. Leaders from both congregations got together and were hooked. Our trip last September was a terrific testimony to the power of collaboration.

Second Baptist Memphis became the sixth congregation to join the South Africa Ministry Network that now consists of eight CBF churches: in Arkansas (Second Little Rock), North Carolina (First Wilmington), Tennessee (First Chattanooga, First Knoxville, Second Memphis), and Texas (Broadway in Fort Worth, First Abilene, Gaston Oaks in Dallas). Two weeks after I returned from my first trip I was in the fellowship hall at First Baptist Chattanooga inviting their congregation to join in the initiative. As Second Little Rock did for us last year, our church will do for theirs this November as we travel on mission together. All of us have made multi-year

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Tennessee CBF Assists with KBF's *Extreme Build 2013*

During the week of June 9, five people from Tennessee traveled to Stearns, KY, to partner with Kentucky Baptist Fellowship to build a new home in one week for Malachi, Shawna and Easton Barnett. Now we know why this project is referred to as a *miracle of partnerships*. It truly was a miracle to watch the shell of a house (completed during the pre-build the week before) become a move-in ready home in six days. Here are some of Terry Maples' observations from participating in this mission collaboration:

- Josh Speight, who serves with Kentucky Baptist Fellowship, made sure each step of the build was organized and enlisted great helpers to guide each aspect of the construction. Skilled leaders gave oversight to the building process and assigned folks to specific projects.
- Among the participants was a good balance of skilled and non-skilled workers. I was amazed watching how people's gifts were offered and came together beautifully to accomplish tasks.
- Joan and I were able to renew friendships from our time at Southern Seminary (30 years ago).
- We noticed a good mix of seasoned *Extreme Build* folks and first-timers. All were welcome, and a positive spirit pervaded the build from the beginning.
- We worked alongside really neat and passionate people who are committed to this annual signature project of Kentucky Baptist Fellowship. *Extreme Build* is about much more than building a house; it's about building The Fellowship.
- Though temperatures were really hot, we all worked hard and long hours to get the job done. Someone always made sure we stayed hydrated.
- Our team from Tennessee (Julie Carr from Knoxville and Geoffrey and Skyler Herring and Joan and Terry Maples from FBC Murfreesboro) made a significant contribution to the build. We did our best, and our investment of time and energy was appreciated. In fact, the Tennessee team was given an award on Friday night for the "spark and energy we brought to *Extreme Build*."
- Celebration Day brought tears of joy and gratitude as we dedicated the house and handed the keys to the Barnett family.
- I'm thankful for the opportunity to partner in ministry with KBF and the Rural Poverty Initiative of CBF!

TN folks at work during *Extreme Build*!



Needed: A New Christian Education Scorecard!

by Terry Maples, Field Coordinator



As a 27-year church education veteran, I'm aware fall is a good time to evaluate the effectiveness of discipleship ministries in the church. Often training events for teachers and small group facilitators are planned to kick-off the new year. Sometimes lay leaders go away on retreat to reflect on what is working well and what needs improvement. These are excellent steps to take.

What is the goal of Christian education in the church? According to my friends Israel Galindo and Marty Canaday, "The goal of congregational Christian education is forming individuals into the likeness of Jesus Christ as members of a faith community. The result of this formation is discipleship—Christ followers who are obedient to God and God's call to grow and serve in and through the Church" ([Planning for Christian Education Formation](#)). I wholeheartedly agree with

this goal and its implications for local congregations.

The goal of Christian education ministries is to form faith in Jesus Christ that results in compassionate engagement with the world. To effectively evaluate our educational ministries, congregational leaders must dialogue about what it means to follow Jesus, to be a disciple of Jesus. If we are currently evaluating effectiveness based on how many attend each week, I think we shortchange the transformative nature of Christian education! While important, attendance is *not* an effective tool for measuring Christlikeness. Folks can attend every week and not embrace obedience to the Jesus' way. A new scorecard is in order. How about questions like these to guide your evaluation of Christian education this year? While confessing they are more difficult to measure, I believe wrestling with these is worthwhile.

- a) Are participants becoming more like Jesus in their lifestyles and values? Faithfulness is about imitating Jesus, not simply participating, gaining additional knowledge, or believing more.
- b) Are participants more loving? Are they increasing their capacity to love those who are different? Do loving relationships extend beyond race, class, creed, nationality, religion, or political party? Does love of neighbor result in radical hospitality and inclusivity like Jesus practiced?
- c) Are participants exhibiting more grace and less judgment in their daily encounters?
- d) Are participants placing more trust in God and less in themselves? In other words, are folks "seeking first the kingdom of God?" Perhaps this is best evidenced by how we invest the financial resources entrusted to our care.
- e) Are participants selflessly giving themselves away in service to the Kingdom? Serving others, especially *the least of these*, was Jesus' pattern. Seeing and responding to human need is a natural by-product of good disciple-making in the church. Congregations play an important role in helping disciples evaluate their investment of time and gifts, i.e. stewardship of life.
- f) Are participants cultivating an intimate relationship with God through the disciplines/practices of the faith (prayer, worship, study, giving, serving, practicing hospitality, etc.)?
- g) Is weekly study inspiring folks to work for peace and justice in the world?
- h) Are participants content to reaffirm what they already know and believe, or are they becoming more open to honest dialogue about differing perspectives and beliefs?
- i) Are participants willing to acknowledge what they do not know? In other words, do we accept and embrace mystery and ambiguity? Certitude leaves little room for authentic faith and fails to acknowledge finite humans can never fully know God who is infinite.

Dallas Willard rightly asserts regarding the church, "Non-discipleship is the elephant in the room." Honest reflection around questions like the ones above can help congregations realize that making disciples is significantly different and more important than simply "teaching lessons" each week. Discipleship is about forming faith in Jesus, and faith communities play a key role in helping people become like Jesus in thought, word, and deed.

If I can assist your congregation in wrestling with questions like these, give me a call or write me an email. I welcome the opportunity to journey into deeper discipleship with you!

commitments to be partners in ministry with native South Africans and CBF field personnel serving together in a nation rich with opportunities for meaningful service. Any church whose members go on mission there are able to use their skills and gifts. Projects we have undertaken include: medical teams, taking care of babies, VBS activities, music, construction projects, and manual labor. Presently we partner with three ministries in South Africa:

Refilwe: a 45-acre rural community development project outside Johannesburg. Refilwe has been ministering to this greatly underserved area for over 15 years. On site Refilwe houses 50 formerly orphaned children in their God's family project. There also are several sustainable income generating projects that include a fish farm, vegetable garden, fruit orchard, worm farm and carpentry shop. Numerous classes designed to teach people in the community the skills necessary to sustain themselves are also offered.

Door of Hope: During the height of the HIV/AIDS crisis the area surrounding Berea Baptist Church in Johannesburg was finding abandoned newborns in great numbers. In response they cut a hole in the wall of their building where mothers could safely place their babies. Since their beginning in 1999, Door of Hope has taken in and enabled the adoption of over 900 babies.

Arise Ministries: A ministry started by the pastor, Cheryl Allen, who founded Door of Hope. Arise works in the rural Zulu Tribal Lands implementing feeding programs, sustainable development, church planting, and much more.

What began as a couple of pastors' dreams some 40 years ago has taken shape today in ways they likely never imagined. The power of partnerships cannot be overstated. All of us sharing in a common mission, bringing our own particular gifts and skills, working alongside indigenous peoples and the field personnel who daily serve with them has proven more powerful than any of us involved in this work could have hoped. We are seeing firsthand evidence of Spirit's power to pull us in for a common task, only to whip us around and scatter us back into our own communities to carry on in ministry in ways that are uniquely our own. For this we can only say, "Thanks be to God!"

CBF General Assembly

The 2013 General Assembly in Greensboro, NC, was a wonderful experience for all who gathered! Here are a few images of Tennessee folks participating in the large group gathering, sharing fellowship, and enjoying time with friends!





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Mission Engagement

Tennessee CBF is making a significant kingdom impact. Recently, we invested in the following mission projects:

Contributed \$1,000 to Oklahoma CBF to assist with disaster relief.

Invested \$2,000 in the *Extreme Build* in McCreary County, KY.

Provided \$1,000 stipends to three college students from TN serving with CBF's Student.Go this summer.

Helped CBF provide SelahVIE, the end-of-summer experience for college students. We will help one other student participate in SelahVIE.

Assisted a recent college graduate from Tennessee who is engaging in missions with immigrants for a year while living in an intentional community in Tucson, Arizona, along the Mexico border.

Pray for the TCBF Coordinating Council as we discern where to engage in missions this year!

Breaking News Regarding TCBF's General Assembly!

Exciting plans are underway for the 2014 TCBF General Assembly in Memphis. The schedule has been adjusted to create a different type of experience this year.

We kick-off the General Assembly with a dinner on Friday, April 11, at Trinity Baptist, Cordova. CBF's Executive Coordinator, Suzii Paynter, is our keynote speaker for the evening.

On Saturday, April 12, we gather at Second Baptist, Memphis, to "put feet" to what we learned on Friday evening. We will fan-out across the city to engage in mission projects. Then we will return to the church for lunch and reflection around our experiences. The General Assembly experience concludes with worship and communion.

Stay tuned for further details. For now, mark your calendars for April 11-12, 2014!