

March 2013

# LINK

News and Stories from TN Cooperative Baptist Fellowship



Back to the Basics

3 R's

Repair - Restore - Reconcile

## Tennessee CBF General Assembly

Saturday, April 13, 2013

First Baptist Church - Chattanooga, Tennessee

Theme: *Back to the Basics - 3R's - Repair, Restore, Reconcile*

Focal Passage: Luke 19:1-10

An expression often heard in school systems is, "We've got to get back to the basics: reading, writing, and arithmetic" (the 3 R's). The theme for TCBF's General Assembly this year focuses on getting back to the basics for establishing and maintaining healthy relationships.

Why focus on repairing, restoring, and reconciling relationships? Because Jesus was a repairer, a restorer, and a reconciler. Ask Zacchaeus. He knows. Jesus opens hearts and minds—and eyes and ears—to an understanding of what it means to live in just, loving, kingdom-building relationships with one's neighbors. In fact, to imitate Jesus means to commit to the work of repairing wrongs, restoring rights, and reconciling relationships.

Andy Watts, Associate Professor of Christian Ethics at Belmont University, will suggest that a bright future for TCBF lies in letting this storyline pierce our imaginations and open our hearts. He will propose in his Assembly address that we can more fully participate in Jesus' saving work by attuning themselves spiritually and morally to the rifts that divide us from each other and from our neighbors.

Andy will send General Assembly participants into "listening sessions" with prompts serving as discussion guides. The goals of the listening sessions are: 1) to speak to the social, theological, political and organizational issues that hinder our fellowship from being what it might be; and, 2) create a roadmap for repairing, restoring, and reconciling the divides found around these issues. Andy will wrap up the day with a sermon titled, "I've Got the Moves Like Zacchaeus."

Highlights of the 2013 General Assembly include a complimentary Women in Ministry breakfast, an exhibit hall to learn about ministry partners, presentation of the Betty Galloway Award and Ircel Harrison Scholarship, adoption of a new budget, and opportunities to fellowship. Look inside *The LINK* for more!

## Women in Ministry Breakfast at GA

All (males and females) who support and encourage women in ministry are invited to a complimentary breakfast on Saturday, April 13, at FBC Chattanooga. This gathering takes place at 7:45 a.m. in the church parlor. Make your reservation when you register.

The purpose of this breakfast gathering is to provide additional opportunity for fellowship and sharing. There will be conversation around the tables regarding opportunities and challenges associated with being women in ministry.

## Discussion Groups at GA

A unique feature of this year's TCBF General Assembly is the intentional time scheduled to dialogue around Andy Watts' presentation. Participants will be divided into eight different groups to address issues that keep us from being reconciled to each other and our neighbors. Lessons learned may be applied to any arena of life (personal, interpersonal, and communal). The General Assembly Planning Team feels this educational component will greatly enrich the General Assembly. Our goal is for participants to walk away with tools to help facilitate the process of reconciliation and repair in their lives, in their congregations, and in their neighborhoods. Come to the General Assembly so you can engage the conversation!

## TCBF General Assembly Details

Please plan to participate in the TCBF General Assembly! Here are the details you need to know about Tennessee CBF's 2013 General Assembly on April 13 at First Baptist Church in Chattanooga, TN:

### Saturday, April 13

7:45 a.m.	"Women in Ministry" Complimentary Breakfast (open to all)
8:30 a.m.	Registration
9:00 a.m.	Welcome & Morning Prayers
9:15 a.m.	Theme Interpretation - Dr. Andy Watts
10:00 a.m.	Break
10:15 a.m.	Discussion Groups
11:45 a.m.	Lunch
1:30 p.m.	Plenary Session Business, Awards, & Recognitions
2:00 p.m.	Worship & Communion

Register for the General Assembly online at [tncbf.org](http://tncbf.org) or you can fill out the registration form on page three of this newsletter and mail it to the TCBF office. A children's program and childcare for preschoolers are provided. Children must be registered in advance.

Make your hotel reservations. We have secured a "CBF block of rooms" at two hotels in downtown Chattanooga:

### Hampton Inn and Suites - \$129.00

400 Chestnut Street

[423-693-0500](tel:423-693-0500)

Reservations must be received by 3/16/13.

### Courtyard by Marriott Chattanooga - \$124.00

200 Chestnut Street

[423-755-0872](tel:423-755-0872)

Reservations must be received by 3/18/13.

NOTE: Less expensive hotel rooms are available if you are willing to stay a few miles away from the downtown area.

Please advertise the TCBF General Assembly in your church newsletters and bulletins. Promotional packets were mailed to churches, and these same resources are accessible from the TCBF website ([tncbf.org](http://tncbf.org)).

See you in Chattanooga! If your schedule allows, stay over and enjoy all that Chattanooga has to offer!

# Back to the Basics



Repair - Restore - Reconcile

## REGISTRATION FORM

Tennessee CBF  
General Assembly  
First Baptist Church  
Chattanooga, TN

Saturday, April 13, 2013

### Adults/Youth

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Church \_\_\_\_\_

**Children (for children grades K through 5) Advance registration** for age-appropriate activities is required. Please list name, and current school grade of those attending.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Current school grade \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Current school grade \_\_\_\_\_

Allergies (check one) Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ (If yes, please list allergies.)

### Preschool

**(for children 6 months through pre-K) Advance registration required.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Allergies (check one) Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ (If yes, please list allergies.)

### Meal Sign-up:

#### Saturday Luncheon:

\_\_\_\_\_ Number of youth/adults (\$10 each) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Number of grade school children (\$5 each) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Number of preschoolers (no charge)

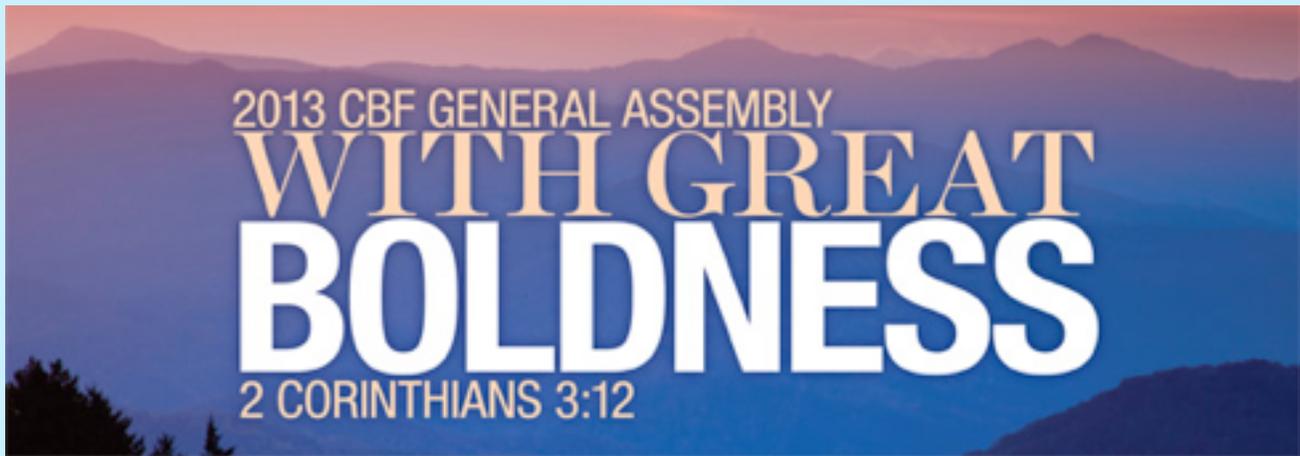
Amount included with registration \$ \_\_\_\_\_

#### Women in Ministry Breakfast:

\_\_\_\_\_ Number of reservations for the complimentary Women in Ministry Breakfast (7:45 AM)

**Mail Registration & Payment to: Tennessee CBF**

**P.O. Box 11747 Murfreesboro, TN 37129 OR register online at [tncbf.org](http://tncbf.org).**



Join with other Fellowship Baptists in Greensboro, NC, June 26-28, 2013. Why should you attend? Here are a few reasons why YOU need to participate in this year's General Assembly: you will enjoy fellowship with like-minded Baptists; you can meet our new Executive Coordinator, Suzii Paynter; you can participate in implementation sessions related to the 2012 Task Force; you can meet new field personnel and church planters at the commissioning service; you can attend the BWIM 30th Anniversary Worship; you can learn about "Dawnings" at the Leadership Institute; and you can participate in meaningful worship and workshops. All this and much more awaits you in Greensboro! Register now at <http://www.thefellowship.info/General-Assembly/PreRegistration>.

NOTE: TCBF encourages your participation in the CBF General Assembly. We have a limited number of scholarships available to assist clergy whose churches cannot afford to send them to Greensboro. Contact Terry Maples at [tncbf.org](http://tncbf.org) for details or to request assistance.

## Suzii Paynter - CBF's new Executive Coordinator

Suzii Paynter of Austin, Texas, has been named candidate for the position of Executive Coordinator of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. Paynter currently serves as Director of the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission and Director of the Advocacy Care Center of the Baptist General Convention of Texas. She directs all public policy initiatives for state and federal issues and builds relationships with other religious



bodies. In addition, she oversees church outreach, the Texas Baptist Hunger Fund Offering, community care ministries of restorative justice, anti-human trafficking, hunger and poverty, healthcare ministries, the Texas Baptist chaplaincy program, and Texas Baptist counseling services.

As a leader at the BGCT since 2001, Paynter has envisioned, created and managed large-scale programs and projects that focus on ministering alongside and advocating for the least of these. Her experiences and accomplishments reflect her commitment to the missional and cooperative work of Baptists at all levels – local, state, national, regional, and international, as well as ecumenical and interfaith ministries.

For more information on Paynter, including additional biographical information, video, and photos, go to [www.thefellowship.info/paynter](http://www.thefellowship.info/paynter). The video prepared by CBF is a good introduction to Suzii Paynter.

## Second Annual Faith Formation Blitz Week of April 21-27, 2013



Last April TCBF sponsored a *Faith Formation Blitz* across the state of Tennessee. During luncheons, Bo Prosser from National CBF and Terry Maples led discussions with church staff ministers about the need to focus on forming faith in the person of Jesus Christ as opposed to simply “teaching lessons.”

Plans are underway for this year’s blitz. Our goal is to build upon last year’s experience. We’ve invited Dr.

Steve Booth to facilitate this year’s blitz. Steve is a long-time friend of Terry Maples and Mike Fink (Coordinating Council member). Steve currently serves as Associate Pastor for Christian Formation at First Baptist Church in Richmond, VA. He brings many years of experience guiding faith formation and Christian education in the local church. Steve also serves on the adjunctive faculty at Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond.

The focus of this blitz is *Lifelong Faith Formation*. Vocational ministers and congregational teachers are invited. We begin the week of April 21 on the eastern side of Tennessee and complete the blitz in Memphis. Stay tuned for dates, locations, and additional details about the sessions. Make plans for educational leaders in your congregation to participate and learn from this gifted and passionate educator.

### Register NOW for *Extreme Build*, June 9-15

Would you like to participate in “a miracle of partnerships”? You can by helping with this year’s *Extreme Build*, a ministry of Kentucky Baptist Fellowship and other helping agencies, to build a home for a needy young family. Malachi and Shawna Barnett have been selected as the recipients of a new home this year in McCreary County, KY. In one week, volunteers from Kentucky and other states (including Tennessee) will construct a nice home for this family.

We are excited TCBF will partner with Kentucky Baptist Fellowship for *Extreme Build 2013!* A wide variety of skills are needed. You must register with KBF for this project by May 15. The registration fee is \$25 per day you plan to work (maximum is \$100). TCBF can send a maximum of 12 people on this mission project, so sign up soon at:

<https://kybfellowship.squarespace.com/extreme-build-2013/2013/1/2/extreme-build-8-registration>. Also notify Terry Maples at [tmaples@tncbf.org](mailto:tmaples@tncbf.org) after you have registered. TCBF will assist with lodging cost which is over and above the registration fee.

### Mission Grant Update

Thanks to generous donations to TCBF’s state missions offering (Tennessee Priorities in Mission), three mission grants of \$1,000 were recently awarded.

A grant was given to **Immanuel Baptist Church in Nashville** to start a new conversational English program for refugees and immigrants. The focus of this mission project is to create opportunities for this underserved population to develop their skills as English speakers.

A grant was given to **Trinity Baptist Church-Cordova** to help with a mission project to Guatemala this summer. This project involves constructing a church building and homes. 2013 marks four years in a row for this mission partnership.

A grant was given to **Woodmont Baptist Church in Nashville** to help feed the hungry. The grant will be used to purchase food for high school students who need nourishment over the weekend when school is not in session.

Additional mission grants of \$1,000 are available to assist congregations with their efforts to be the presence of Christ in the world. Applications are available on the missions portion of the TCBF website.

Not only do we support congregational mission grants with TPIM offerings, we also support Samaritan Ministry in Knoxville, Neverfail Community Church in Sparta, and two Student.GO missionaries this summer.

## It's Time for Cooperation! by Terry Maples, Field Coordinator



At a gathering of CBF leaders a while back, moderator Keith Herron noted that in the first twenty years of CBF's existence we focused primarily on *fellowship* (true to our name). In this next window of time, he suggested the

focus must shift to another significant part of our name *cooperative*. I think he's on target!

This need to focus on cooperation and what's in the best interest of the Fellowship Community reminds me of two stories I heard several years ago. I think the truth expressed in both of them will aid our journey toward becoming more *cooperative*.

The first story was about a horse pull in Canada. One horse pulled 9,000 pounds and another managed 8,000 pounds. Together, we would expect them to pull around 17,000 pounds. Not so! When yoked together, the two horses pulled 30,000 pounds!

The second story highlighted the conquest of Mount Rainier by nine physically challenged people. One of the climbers had an artificial leg, one was an epileptic, two were deaf, and five were blind. Despite these challenges, the nine successfully ascended and descended the 14,000-foot mountain. When asked how they managed such a feat, one climber said, "We had a lot of help from one another."

I believe these two stories communicate very well how much we too need this new focus on cooperation and collaboration in the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship and TCBF. If two horses can pull 76% more weight together than they can alone, just think what any grouping of committed people can accomplish if they all pull together—in the same direction—at the same

time. Our "pulling potential" combined with the power of Holy Spirit creates powerful synergy.

Like the mountain climbers, we in the Fellowship Community need to support and encourage each other. The journey of faith does not thrive in isolation. When we "help one another" in a genuine spiritual community we can accomplish great things for God.

You've probably seen the old cartoon of the mules tied together so neither could reach food. After a period of straining against each other, the mules (despite their stubbornness) finally realize if they cooperate, both of them can eat from one food supply then move together to the other.

To me, this sounds much like what is happening with the implementation of CBF's new organizational structure. We acknowledge assets throughout our fellowship. In this new era we will intentionally and innovatively work together (collaborate and share financial, people, and expertise resources) to accomplish more for the kingdom. As a result, our state and regional organizations gain strength, and National CBF greatly expands its global impact. The symbiotic relationship we've envisioned becomes reality, and we know the joy and mutual benefit of living and serving together in community. Without a doubt, we depend on each other to thrive!

As with anything new and different, there will be bumps along our path as we imagine and employ new ways of working together and navigate sticky wickets like funding streams. But if we collaborate and pull in the same direction at the same time we'll model God's ideal for relationships, experience the beauty of symbiotic relationships, and reap great rewards!

Remember, "Two are better than one...for if they fall, one will lift up the other...a threefold cord is not quickly broken" (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12). How much stronger is a cord comprised of all the states and regions, National CBF, and our gifted partners. It's time to embody all that the *cooperative* part of our name entails!

# The Future of Baptists

by Dr. Walter Shurden

The following points were made by Walter Shurden, Baptist historian and minister-at-large at Mercer University, in a presentation at the Baptist Heritage Council breakfast held during CBF/GA's 2010 Fall General Assembly. Used by permission.



## Retain the good.

The future of CBF Baptists may be cloudy but it is not dismal. Fisher Humphreys reminds us that we brought some good things out of the controversy. Our future will be brighter if we remember and retain the good things. What are they? They are:

- 1) a growing holistic spirituality,
- 2) a sense of gender equality,
- 3) a sense of racial equality,
- 4) some good theological education and educators,
- 5) a passion for missions,
- 6) an enormous compassion for the hurting, and
- 7) an awareness that justice is part of our work with God in the world.

## Rethink what it means to be “lost”.

The future of Baptists will be brighter if we rethink what it means to be “lost” in our society. Eschatological fears no longer fuel a theology of outreach in most of our churches, conservative or liberal. Scaring hell out of people no longer works for churches or church's hearers, so a redefinition of “lost” is in order. Meaninglessness, purposelessness, loneliness, alienation, the inability to find a sanctuary for shame and guilt, and the deep, deep sense that one is not loved—these are some of the characteristics of lostness in our time. If we do not believe that people live hellish lives today, we will have little success in developing passion and urgency for sharing the gospel.

## Reaffirm the centrality of preaching.

The future of Baptists will be brighter if we reaffirm the centrality of preaching. We have made remarkable progress with our liturgy and the celebration of the Christian Year. Our churches, the clergy, and our seminaries would now help us all by refocusing on the centrality of the pulpit. Work with pastor search committees convinces one of this fact over and over again. Biblical preaching skillfully applied to human hurt is almost a sacrament for our Baptist people.

## Reaffirm discipleship as responsibility.

The future of Baptists will be brighter if we reaffirm discipleship as responsibility. CBFers get an A+ in speaking of freedom. As one of the chief cheerleaders for freedom in CBF life, I want to make it clear that freedom has never meant sloppy discipleship. We too quickly fear legalism. But we reluctantly embrace genuine sacrifice. Sloppy discipleship worships when it is convenient, tips God rather than tithes to the kingdom, or even better, fails to engage in a kind of Christ-like generosity that nudges us toward sacrifice. Sloppy discipleship dismisses religious organizations and institutions as mindless ecclesiastical bureaucracies rather than embracing them as corporate conduits of our caring. Churches cannot do their work without money. CBF and CBF partners cannot do their work without money either. We need a new dose of responsibility alongside our almost overdose on freedom. We are both free and faithful Baptists!

## Retain basic Baptist convictions.

Baptists of all kinds may die, including CBF Baptists. Basic Baptist convictions will never die. If Baptists vanished from the earth, some group somewhere would pick up the cry for a personal faith that is free and faithful. Baptist ideas are just that important to human beings.

## Important TCBF News!

The TCBF Coordinating Council meets on Saturday, February 23. Important decisions will be made at that gathering that will impact recommendations coming to the TCBF General Assembly on April 13 at FBC Chattanooga. Be advised these recommendations will be publicized as soon as possible in the TCBF e-newsletters. If you are not on the email distribution list, contact Brittany Jackson at [bjackson@tncbf.org](mailto:bjackson@tncbf.org) to sign up.



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## **TCBF to sponsor two college students participating in Student.GO this summer!**

TCBF will support two college students through Student.GO - a program of CBF Global Missions. Student.GO provides opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students to **serve among and advocate for the most neglected people in our world**. Positions include a wide variety of locations and unique types of ministry and are intended to provide students with hands-on missions experience. Students serve for a summer or a semester alongside CBF Global Missions field personnel and ministry partners in locations around the globe. Not only do students **gain valuable experience in cross-cultural service**, they also **provide much-needed assistance** to the ministries with which they work. Through these experiences, Student.GO strives to help students reach beyond their culture, beyond their comfort zones, and beyond themselves to be the presence of Christ in the world.

Deadline to apply with Student.GO is March 1. Go to <http://studentdotgo.ning.com/>. Once accepted, contact Terry Maples ([tmaples@tncbf.org](mailto:tmaples@tncbf.org)) regarding assistance.

## **Greensboro Sessions**

### **"A Conversation about Race"**

Monday, June 24 - Friday, June 28  
First Baptist Church, Greensboro, NC

College students, register now for *Greensboro Sessions* - a week of missions, fellowship, conversation and reflection on things that matter. Together with dozens of other students, you'll focus on the issues surrounding race, digging deep into the heart of why this matters and how a Christ-follower might respond. Plus, you'll have the opportunity to attend the CBF's National General Assembly.

TCBF can assist three students who desire to attend *Greensboro Sessions*. Contact Terry Maples at [tmaples@tncbf.org](mailto:tmaples@tncbf.org) to apply.