

June 2015

LINK

News and Stories from TN Cooperative Baptist Fellowship



General Assembly - Retrospective

The 23rd annual gathering of Tennessee Cooperative Baptist Fellowship was a positive and uplifting experience for all who assembled in Knoxville. We are indebted to the members of the planning team for the quality decisions they made in designing the experience and to Central Baptist Church of Fountain City for opening their facilities to us and creating a place of welcome for all!

Here are some highlights of the General Assembly:

- Steven Porter unpacked our theme, led a learning lab, and preached during closing worship. Great job, Steven!
- We offered six learning labs led by Devita Parnell, Steven Porter, Steven Reeves, Stephanie Vance, Josh Beeler, and friends from Compassion Coalition. Sessions were

interesting and informative.

- Participants packed more than 20,000 emergency meals for distribution in Guatemala and East Tennessee. Our thanks to Operation Inasmuch for their assistance with this hands-on mission project.
- Participants adopted a budget of \$194,600 and set a goal of \$27,000 for the *Elizabeth Richards Missions Offering* for 2015-2016.
- Ircel Harrison Theological Scholarships were awarded to Luke Moody pursuing a Master of Divinity degree at McAfee and Chan Vinson working on a Doctor of Ministry degree from Northern Baptist Theological Seminary.
- The TCBF General Assembly approved Phillip Moody from King's Cross in Tullahoma as moderator-elect.
- Judy Campbell from First Baptist in Murfreesboro was elected Middle Tennessee Regional Council Leader.
- New members elected to serve on the Coordinating Council include: David Hixson (First Baptist in Chattanooga), Brittany Krebs (First Baptist in Memphis), Jerry Mantooth (Monte Vista in Maryville), Steven Meriwether (Immanuel in Nashville), Wayne Smith (Central Baptist-Bearden in Knoxville), and Scott Willis (First Baptist in Murfreesboro).
- Melissa Roysdon was presented a plaque/gavel to commemorate her service as TCBF Moderator for 2014-2015.
- Our new Moderator is Amy Cook from Second Baptist Church in Memphis.

See additional reports and stories from the 2015 General Assembly in this edition of the *LINK*, and mark your calendars NOW for the 24th TCBF General Assembly on Saturday, April 9, 2016, at King's Cross Church in Tullahoma!



Introducing TCBF's Summer Intern



We are pleased to introduce Jenny Lee, a Doctoral Fellow in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis at East Tennessee State University, TCBF's Summer 2015 intern. Jenny graduated from Campbell University with a Bachelor of Arts in Religion in 2008 and Campbell University Divinity School with a Master of Divinity in 2011. Jenny was ordained by First Baptist Church in Asheville, North Carolina, in 2013.

As part of this internship, Jenny will work with Terry Maples and Brittany Jackson to accomplish a number of learning goals. She will consult with Stephen Reeves at CBF Global to help us address payday lending in Tennessee. She will also help us craft press releases for mission grants, assist with website updates, and help with social media. Jenny will share during the Tennessee state meeting in Dallas at the CBF General Assembly.

Financial Report

Thanks to the generous support of churches and individuals, budget income exceeds budget expenses (July 1, 2014-April 30, 2015) by \$23,604.64. To date, \$20,463.97 has been given to the *Elizabeth Richards Mission Offering* goal of \$27,500. We continue collecting until June 30, and we express gratitude to all who sustain kingdom ministries through TCBF.

More General Assembly Highlights

New TCBF Logo!

This year CBF Global engaged in a branding process. With the branding work came a new logo and an invitation for states and regions to craft new logos under the house brand. The new TCBF logo was unveiled at the General Assembly. Here are two versions. We look forward to integrating these logos into our promotional materials and communication tools.



General Assembly Offering

The TCBF Coordinating Council recommended this year's General Assembly offering be used to support the mission efforts of Tennessee churches in conjunction with the Baptist World Congress in South Africa. We gave \$575.00 to purchase sleeping bags for youth from FBC Chattanooga and Second Baptist in Memphis. The sleeping bags will be left in South Africa to assist the ministry of our South Africa partners.

Memorandum of Understanding

The TCBF Coordinating Council recommended to the General Assembly that TCBF enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with CBF. Here is the text of the MOU approved by General Assembly participants:

Together, we, Tennessee CBF and the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, affirm our partnership in the ministry of Jesus Christ. As partners we commit to sharing material, spiritual and intellectual resources; to providing mutual promotion and communications assistance; to serving together with field personnel and others in Tennessee and around the world; to representation on boards and committees as required or appropriate; and to faithful and consistent prayer for one another.

This MOU is an important step in TCBF's symbiotic relationship with CBF Global. This document also paves the way for us to begin working on a contextual covenant to uniquely describe how each organization relates to the other.

Betty Galloway Advocacy for Women in Ministry Award



The 2015 recipient of the Betty Galloway Advocacy for Women in Ministry Award is **Dr. Mike Smith**, Senior Pastor at Central Baptist Church of Fountain City in Knoxville. Lori Williamson shared the following remarks and presented the award during the General Assembly on April 11, 2015:

Today, I have the honor and privilege of presenting Dr. Mike Smith with the Betty Galloway Advocacy for Women in Ministry Award. I personally know many individuals, women and men, who have been profoundly and deeply impacted by Dr. Smith's ministry as pastor, professor, mentor, and friend.

I am thrilled to share with you one story out of many, of what Dr. Smith's affirmation and support of women in ministry looks like.

I grew up in a loving, well-intentioned independent Baptist church, which unfortunately practiced and preached theologically supported gender inequality. Women were church members who were encouraged to pray, but not publicly if men were present. We were counted for business meeting attendance, but not in the decision-making votes. Women participated in the daily work of the church as designated appropriate for our role. Women never, ever addressed the congregation from the pulpit! Why? Because this church believed God was pleased when everyone followed the gender roles God created and mandated.

In college, I began attending First Baptist Church

Murfreesboro shortly before Dr. Smith began his pastorate. Dr. Smith's sermons spoke to me of how God's love and Jesus' teachings provide the opportunity for us to grow in ways that deepen our love for God and for others. I felt supported and encouraged in questioning, seeking, and engaging in church life.

One morning in my "We're All Newlyweds" Sunday School class, Dr. Smith was the speaker. His message that day about CBF and women in ministry would feel very familiar in this gathering. However, at 24 years old, this was the first time a pastor, whom I trusted and respected, affirmed that God created, loved, and called women and men equally in life and in ministry – even in the role of pastor.

Finally! I felt like I had a space, a voice, and a future in the church. The potential for theologically supported gender equality to be valued, taught and practiced within the church was affirmed. I had waited 24 years for this affirmation.

This foundation of support and affirmation gave me the courage to pursue my dream of seminary. Dr. Smith worked alongside Ircel Harrison and TCBF to start a Master of Divinity program in Murfreesboro with Central Baptist Theological Seminary. I never envisioned pursuing an M. Div. My embedded theological beliefs about the role of women in the church still spoke loudly. I clearly remember approaching Dr. Smith to ask for a reference for Central, with the bigger question that I was too anxious to ask. "Am I crazy to think I can do this?" Dr. Smith's confidence and encouragement that this was a reasonable aspiration helped me to make this very public step toward vocational ministry.

Dr. Smith continued to walk alongside me on the seminary journey as a pastor, professor, and mentor. He made himself available to my ongoing questions as seminary challenged and stretched my beliefs. At first, I was frustrated with receiving Dr. Smith's response "That's a good question. You should think about that." Over time, I learned to appreciate and adopt this response in my work with others. I realized he was giving the ultimate support and affirmation with this answer.

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Dallas, Texas

CBF General Assembly

June 15-19, 2015

REGISTER FOR FREE TODAY: thefellowship.info/assembly

Join with other Fellowship Baptists in Dallas for the CBF General Assembly! The best way to get to know CBF is to participate in the annual gathering. Here are a few reasons we would love to see you at this year's General Assembly:

1. Enjoy fellowship with like-minded Baptists from across the country.
2. Participate in a Prayer Retreat on June 15-17.
3. Engage in the Leadership Institute on Wednesday from 1:30-4:00 p.m. Dr. David Wilhite, Associate Professor of Christian Theology at Truett, will address a holistic view of the gospels in our preaching and teaching.
4. Participate in the commissioning of field personnel, church starters, and pastoral counselors on Wednesday evening.
5. Meet friends old and new at The Gathering Place that features over 50 interactive booths and a Missions Market.
6. Attend myriad workshops around women in ministry, Christian advocacy, global missions, local missions, worship/music ministry, current issues, spiritual formation, and pastors.
7. Engage in meaningful worship with Ken Medema leading us with his creative compositions. You will hear inspirational preachers from across the Fellowship.
8. Participate in networking breakfasts and lunch or dinner gatherings with ministry partners.

Join us Thursday afternoon at 4:15 p.m. when folks from Tennessee gather in Cockrell Room for our state meeting. This year we focus on sharing fellowship, hearing stories from TCBF mission engagement, and learning about plans for mission projects in conjunction with the Baptist World Congress.

All this and much more awaits you at the Hyatt Regency in Dallas, TX! Register now at www.cbf.net/general-assembly. See you there!

Betty Galloway Award Continued

Dr. Smith trusts in the priesthood of all believers and that God is actively at work in our lives.

Dr. Smith provided space and opportunity for me to practice ministry through the Worship Team. I became comfortable and confident in my voice being heard in leadership and in worship. I learned from Dr. Smith's example how to balance support and encouragement with guidance and teaching. It sounds subtle, but there is a major difference between Dr. Smith saying an idea "has potential" and "let's keep thinking about that."

One standout memory was being supported in playing the role of a female pastor during a worship skit. I was overwhelmingly moved to realize I was playing a small part in making sure the girls in the service didn't have to wait 24 years to have the equality in God's love and calling affirmed.

This is what advocacy for women in ministry looks like! Support and affirmation, teaching and encouragement, providing space for all to actively participate in ministry and learning. Dr. Smith, thank you for your ongoing support and affirmation of women in ministry.

TCBF Community Mission Trailer Update

Three years ago Tennessee CBF launched a new mission effort. With the assistance of CBF Disaster Response, we purchased a community mission trailer, stocked it with tools and supplies, and made it available to churches across the state. The goal was to help churches become more missional by seeing needs in their communities and meeting them in Jesus' name. Using the TCBF trailer kept churches from incurring the expense of tools and supplies.



For myriad reasons, the effort did not yield the results we anticipated. The trailer was used infrequently. Perhaps we underestimated the challenge of transporting the trailer long distances from east to west TN. The bottom line is we were not content for the trailer to stand unused for long periods of time.

The Coordinating Council engaged in many discussions about the best path forward for the TCBF community mission trailer. We explored a number of options for effective stewardship of the trailer and determined the best course of action was to gift the trailer to a mission or ministry partner. Following a number of conversations with leaders

across our state, Terry Maples recommended to the Coordinating Council that the trailer, tools, and supplies be given to King's Cross in Tullahoma. The members of the Coordinating Council agreed this was a wise investment for TCBF.

Why did we make the decision to gift the trailer to King's Cross? This congregation most often requested to use the trailer for mission projects. After one of King's Cross' mission projects working with Appalachian Outreach, members came back home and said, "We need to engage in this type of ministry here in our own area." That birthed what has been named the "Hands and Feet Ministry" (see photos of recent "Hands and Feet Ministry" home repair projects). Efforts to repair homes in the Tullahoma region have been extremely fruitful.



Terry Maples delivered the trailer to Tullahoma on April 19 and presented the keys and title to the trailer to Phillip Moody and the King's Cross community. TCBF is excited to partner with King's Cross in this way. We anticipate hearing wonderful stories of how the trailer has resourced and enriched the "Hands and Feet Ministry" of this faith community.

Our thanks to all who invested in making the TCBF community mission trailer a reality. We celebrate all who utilized the trailer and the tangible projects it empowered. Finally, we give thanks to God for inspiring passion and compassion in folks who serve in the "Hands and Feet Ministry" at King's Cross.



TCBF Coordinating Council 2015-2016

The Coordinating Council serves as the governing body for Tennessee Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. The Coordinating Council carries out decisions made during the General Assembly and has authority to guide the work and make decisions on behalf of TCBF when the General Assembly is not in session.

TCBF State Missions Offering

At the General Assembly in Knoxville, we approved a goal of \$27,000 for the Elizabeth Richards Missions Offering for 2015-2016. Here are the recipients of this coming year's state missions offering:

Congregational Mission Grants	11,000	
Samaritan Ministry in Knoxville	5,000	
Neverfail Community Church in Sparta	5,000	
Regional Ministry Partners	6,000	
West TN Partner	1,500	
Middle TN Partner	1,500	
Southeast TN Partner	1,500	
East TN Partner	1,500	
TOTAL GOAL		\$27,000

We kept Samaritan Ministry and Neverfail Community Church as primary partners for the offering, and we approved a recommendation to add new regional partners. These partners, selected by the regional councils, will receive a distribution of \$1,500 when we reach our goal.

East TN - **Appalachian Outreach** - Appalachian Outreach, a ministry of Carson-Newman, began as a home repair ministry and has expanded to include a wide variety of ministries for folks in poverty. Read more at <http://web.cn.edu/ao>.

Southeast TN - **Christian Women's Job Corps - Bridges of Hope** is located at FBC Chattanooga and transforms the lives of women who have been marginalized by life circumstances. For additional information, go to www.wmu.com/cwjc.

Middle TN - **The Next Door** - This ministry in Nashville serves women being released from prison. Read more at www.thenextdoor.org.

West TN - **Mid-South Food Bank's Food for Kids Backpack Program** in Memphis. Read more about this feeding ministry at www.midsouthfoodbank.org/feedingchildren.

Stay tuned for promotional materials for the state missions offering. We begin collecting this offering on July 1, 2015 and continue through June 30, 2016.

TCBF Officers:

Amy Cook, Moderator, Second Baptist Church, Memphis
Melissa Roysdon, Immediate Past Moderator, Providence Baptist Church, Cookeville
Phillip Moody, Moderator-Elect, King's Cross Church, Tullahoma
Mary Jayne Allen, Recorder, First Baptist Church, Chattanooga

Term Expiring 2016:

Steven Meriwether, clergy, Immanuel Baptist Church, Nashville
Wayne Smith, laity, Central Baptist Church of Bearden, Knoxville

Term Expiring 2017:

Jerry Mantooth, clergy, Monte Vista Baptist Church, Maryville
Brittany Krebs, clergy, First Baptist Church, Memphis

Term Expiring 2018:

David Hixson, laity, First Baptist Church, Chattanooga
Scott Willis, clergy, First Baptist Church, Murfreesboro

Regional Council Leaders (serve on Coordinating Council by virtue of position):

West - *Stephen Cook*, clergy, Second Baptist Church, Memphis
 Middle - *Judy Campbell*, laity, First Baptist Church, Murfreesboro
 Southeast - *Mary Jayne Allen*, retired clergy, First Baptist Church, Chattanooga
 East - *Scott Claybrook*, clergy, First Baptist Church, Knoxville

Ex-Officio:

Brittany Jackson, TCBF Office Manager
Terry Maples, TCBF Field Coordinator

We thank God for these gifted folks who will guide the work of Tennessee CBF. Pray for the Coordinating Council as it makes important decisions this year.

Reflecting on Five Years!

by Terry Maples



Often we hear people declare, “My, how time flies!” This idiom simply implies time passes quickly. A companion expression comes to mind, “Time flies when you’re having fun!” I resonate with both of these statements when I reflect on five years as your field coordinator.

In many ways, I walked into a new position with TCBF. Tennessee CBF decided to call a “field coordinator,” a dually-appointed position with responsibility to TCBF and CBF. This alleviated financial stress for TCBF and created opportunity for closer cooperation and collaboration between the organizations.

Allow me to share observations and reflections on what we have accomplished *together* since June 1, 2010.

- The role and function of the Coordinating Council has evolved. While our Coordinating Council has a legal responsibility to guide the work of TCBF between General Assemblies, I primarily see its work as spiritual – a listening and discerning body! While I believe my leadership role calls upon me to self-define and be willing to share my thoughts, final products are always better when *every* member of the Coordinating Council engages in discernment and decision-making. We reduced the size of the Coordinating Council to facilitate this discernment process – thus eliminating the need for committees. Former committee assignments are now accomplished by the entire Council.
- We created regional councils to plan, implement, evaluate and coordinate the work of CBF in the unique regions of the state. The work of regional councils ties directly to the Coordinating Council because each regional leader also serves on the Coordinating Council. Initiative for our ministry comes through the state organization as well as the regional councils, and we established good checks and balances to ensure effective collaboration.
- We continue to reshape our state missions offering. In fact, the offering has undergone several transformations in five years. We renamed the offering for Elizabeth Richards, retired CBF field personnel who served for many years in Jordan. The most significant shift occurred several years ago when we allocated a large portion of the offering to congregational mission grants, i.e. helping churches engage in hands-on ministry they feel called to do. We have helped resource congregations in powerful ways, and we’ve made kingdom impact with these \$1,000 grants.
- TCBF has become financially healthy. 1) We closed the TCBF office to eliminate rental and equipment costs; Brittany Jackson and I work from home. 2) We operate with a full-time field coordinator and a part-time office manager. 3) Because of streamlining operations we were able to place money in reserves the past two years. 3) We freed a large portion of our budget for mission projects and ministries. We can allocate financial resources to support ministries in Tennessee and invest in CBF’s greater mission enterprise. 4) This October, TCBF assumes full responsibility for the field coordinator’s financial package. 5) TCBF is now postured to help mission and ministry needs as they arise.
- We enhanced our communication tools. We consistently produce an electronic newsletter, and we updated our print newsletter – *The LINK* – now an 8-page color edition containing news and stories from CBF life.
- As part of our emphasis on strengthening the work of CBF, we cultivated relationships with CBF ministries in neighboring states. We highly value relationships formed with CBF Arkansas through *Together for Hope* in Helena, and we feel good about investments made in *Extreme Build*, a Kentucky Baptist Fellowship partnership.
- Our college student ministry continues to expand. We support college students who serve through Student.GO, Passport, and Collegiate Congregational Internships.
- We added a mission engagement component to our annual General Assembly.

I’m excited to see what the next five years hold for our ministry! Time flies, so climb aboard! Stay involved! Keep your eyes open to how God can use all of us through TCBF and its partners.

Thanks for your support and encouragement on the journey!



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Missions News

TCBF assists the ministry of CBF field personnel. We recently sent \$12,500 to CBF Global: \$5,000 for Missy Ward's ministry in Uganda, \$5,000 for Josh and Caroline Smith's ministry in South Africa, and \$2,500 for Bill and Noy Peeler's mission work in Cambodia.

Extreme Build, Kentucky Baptist Fellowship's signature ministry, takes place on June 7-13. In one week, a team will build a house for a needy family. TCBF is contributing \$2,000 to this mission project. Please pray for all involved in this *miracle of partnerships*.

TCBF included *Together for Hope* in Helena, AR in its 2015-2016 budget. We allocated \$2,000 to support a growing relationship with our friends serving this rural poverty initiative.

On May 3, Terry Maples presented a mission grant check of \$1,000 to Central Baptist Church in Johnson City, TN. The funds will be used to support a new branch of Christian Women's Job Corps in East Tennessee. TCBF is delighted to partner in this transformational ministry!

College Student Ministry

Tennessee CBF is excited to support college students as they serve this summer. Here are some ways we invest in college students:

TCBF will support students from affiliated congregations who participate in *Dallas Sessions* in conjunction with the CBF General Assembly, June 15-19.

TCBF will partner with CBF Global to support college students serving as Collegiate Congregational Interns.

TCBF will support college students who participate in *SELAHvie* (in Nashville this year). This end-of-summer experience is for students who served as congregational interns, Student.Go missionaries, and others who desire to engage in a discernment process.

Contact Terry Maples at tmaples@tncbf.org for additional information.