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**Fellowship elects couple
to lead missions program**

By Sarah Zimmerman

ATLANTA (ABP) -- In a move leaders say is symbolic of its way of doing missions, the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship has elected a married couple to guide its global strategies.

The Atlanta-based CBF's Coordinating Council elected Gary and Barbara Baldrige co-coordinators for global missions Oct. 14. A search committee had announced their nomination in September. The couple will oversee missions efforts with an annual budget of \$9.8 million, 126 paid missionaries and an average 3,600 missions volunteers each year.

"Through their co-coordinator relationship, they will exemplify the teamwork approach we have implemented," said Ralph Stocks, CBF missionary among Romani (Gypsy) people.

Fellowship missionaries work in teams that focus on people groups, often across international borders. That is an intentional shift from the traditional model where an individual missionary or couple is assigned to a specific location and country.

The Baldriges succeed Keith Parks, who retired in June after six years as the 8-year-old organization's first global-missions coordinator.

Together, the Baldriges match perfectly a candidate profile developed at the beginning of a yearlong search, said Jim Baucom, a search-committee member from Lynchburg, Va. The committee initially rejected the idea of considering a couple "because none of us could see ourselves in that kind of an arrangement," Baucom said. "God has led us to a better place than we possibly could have perceived as reality."

Barbara Baldrige was one of several candidates interviewed earlier in the process, said Sanford Smith, chairman of the search committee. Gary Baldrige, who has served as interim global-missions coordinator since Parks' retirement, had declined to be nominated. Late in the process, when they interviewed them together, the search committee came to the conclusion that two people -- not one -- were needed to fill the position, Smith said.

CBF Coordinator Daniel Vestal, who also served on the search committee, described Barbara Baldrige as "a missionary's missionary" and a pioneer in strategy and team building. He said Gary Baldrige "has a missions vision and a mission heart" and emphasizes holistic dimensions of the gospel.

"Honestly, I believe either Barbara or Gary could be coordinator for global missions," Vestal said, "but it was like Barbara said, 'We'll have more fun doing it together.'"

The Baldriges worked side-by-side for 16 years as missionaries with the Foreign Mission Board (now International Mission Board) of the Southern Baptist Convention. They worked in Zambia and the island of La Reunion before coordinating missions efforts among people groups with limited access to the Christian gospel.

"In missionary life it's very common for couples to work together," said Gary, 48. Barbara, 49, added: "We've always done it. Our children think this is normal."

They have divided the new workload based on skills. Barbara, the more outgoing of the two, will take the lead in missions promotion and personnel training. Gary, whom Barbara describes as "a very methodical person," will be more involved with developing budgets and connecting churches and individuals with missions opportunities. But the couple will share most of the duties listed on a two-page job description.

Each will receive an annual salary package of \$49,000, Sanford Smith said. As coordinators, both will sit in on executive-level staff meetings, but they will share only one vote," Vestal said.

"Probably the biggest discussion on staff is who's going to get which office," Vestal joked. "There are some unique challenges in administration," he added, ... "but I believe it can work and I believe it will work."

Julie Pennington-Russell, search-committee member from Waco, Texas, said the nomination of a couple to be co-coordinators was "not for the sake of doing something novel and not in order to at last have a woman at the coordinator level."

However, Pennington-Russell, a woman pastor, added, "It is a delight to me that along with the other fine coordinators we have at CBF there will be a woman sitting at that table."

In an interview, Gary Baldrige said he wants CBF's global-missions strategy to include more emphasis on social-justice issues and holistic ministries. He cited ritual anatomical mutilations in Sierra Leone and persecution of Christians in Sudan as examples of places where Christians ought to take a stand.

"What are we modeling as Christians? Where is our prophetic voice?" he asked. "We must do the right thing and integrate that in our missional lifestyle."

He said he also wants to put more energy into mobilizing churches for ministry: "I want us to equip and mobilize churches to do missions. We need to ask churches, 'What training can we help you with for your customization of global missions?'"

Barbara said one of her goals is to "strengthen the missionaries we have with all the resources, training, finances and pastoral care available." She noted that CBF missionaries work in teams, and the "self-managed team process takes a lot of energy."

The Baldriges' missionary experience includes directing a Baptist publishing house, starting churches, developing evangelization plans among Shiite Muslims and supervising 100 missionaries.

The couple resigned from the FMB in 1994. "I wanted to get away from religious work. I love books, and I had management experience, so I combined the two," Gary said. He worked as a bookstore manager in Houston for two years.

Parks, who became CBF global-missions coordinator in 1993 after retiring early from the Foreign Mission Board, offered Gary the job of global-missions associate in 1996. "That was just at the time I was ready to jump back into missions," Gary said.

Barbara made a public commitment to missions at age 17. Since 1994, she has worked through local-church missions programs as a CBF volunteer. This year she served on a task force to develop guidelines for expectations of language acquisition for CBF's field personnel.

"She is a natural leader," said Becky Smith, a fellow missionary who also served on the task force. "She knows what steps to take at any given time, and she's willing to take on the not-so-fun tasks herself."

For a year, Barbara has been operations manager for a church-based program in suburban Atlanta that provides about 700 families a year with assistance for food, utilities, rent, emergency housing and limited medical needs. She counsels clients and works with pastors and volunteers from churches of various denominations.

Gary Baldrige was establishing a career as a journalist when he sensed God's call to missions. He attended Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, but with his experience and a bachelor's degree in journalism, the FMB did not require him to complete seminary to serve as a publications worker. He has accumulated 60 hours of seminary credit, but neither he nor Barbara has a seminary degree and neither is ordained.

A seminary degree was never on the "must-have" list of qualifications for candidates, said Sanford Smith, search-committee chairman. "Gary and Barbara have extensive field experience with proven results. Their faith and theology have developed out of reading, prayer and practical experience -- a hard combination to beat."

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-- Bob Allen contributed to this story

EDITOR'S NOTE: A photo to accompany this story is available on the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship Web site. For photo, go to www.cbfonline.org/artfiles/ Use "access" as name and "access99" as password.

Newly elected CBF leader cites trends in global missions

By Sarah Griffith

ATLANTA (ABP) -- The 21st century calls for a new vision and relationships between churches and missions agencies, said Barbara Baldrige in her first public remarks since being nominated co-coordinator for global missions of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

Missions are undergoing a "shift from an institutional paradigm to a church paradigm," Baldrige said at an Oct. 11-12 "Leadership Edge for the 21st Century" conference sponsored by the Baptist Center for Ethics. Later that week, she and her husband, Gary, were elected as co-directors responsible for developing mission strategies for the Atlanta-based CBF.

One reason the face of missions is changing, Baldrige said, is because churches "should and will be the foundation of mission ministries."

"If churches are not going to do missions in the 21st century, then missions will not be done," she said.

In the past, churches have relied on mission boards and career missionaries to do missions for them, she said. Today, she said, missions must be viewed as a partnership between churches and missionary-sending groups. "Every Christian has a responsibility in doing missions; not just a chosen few," she said.

She identified nine trends she sees in missions strategy:

-- Resources available to churches have been "de-regulated."

Denominations no longer have a monopoly on supplying church resources, she said. Churches are now have "multiple options" for literature, missions education or funding channels.

She said the trend "has taken place in the last few years," and she believes it will continue. "This makes a difference in how we go about doing things," she said.

-- "Individuals and churches are wanting to experience missions rather than just support missions."

"We hear this over and over again: 'What can we do?' People don't want to just give; they want to participate, and people are more able to participate than ever before."

Because of increased mobility, people are "ready, willing and able" to do missions not only in their own community but internationally, she said.

-- Individuals and churches want to share ideas.

"They want to share successes and failures. They want to learn from one another. [They] don't want to be a stand-alone entity in their community. They want to be part of their community."

-- Pastors are often torn between their preference for denominational affiliation and the preference of church members.

The effects of denominational conflict in local churches are "challenges that missionaries and missionary agencies need to be aware pastors are facing," Baldrige said.

-- Christians are "less interested in programs and more interested in lifestyles."

"Ten years ago, everyone wanted a program and notebook," she said, "and now people want to 'be.' They want to continually be learning how to be and how to be more than what they are.

"I think we need to recognize this and capitalize on it as we try to do missions in the 21st century."

-- Local churches are becoming more involved in their own missions.

"Denominations and agencies can no longer say to churches, 'Here's our program. There's our personnel. Support us.' Many churches are almost mini missions-sending agencies. They have experts of their own. They don't need a mission board to tell them what to do."

"We need to be able to partner with these churches in a way that fulfills their goals and fulfills our goals.

-- Local and global missions are becoming interrelated.

"Missions agencies and churches can no longer ignore the relationship between local and global ministries," she said. "Churches can no longer ignore the fact that the world is their community and that the world is in their community."

-- The integrated approach to ministry.

"There are no longer distinct lines" between missions, theological education, ethics, and other Christian efforts, she said.

"There used to be a separate agency that dealt with each area of ministry," she said. "Churches, missionaries and missions agencies must be equipped to take an integrated approach to ministry."

-- "Churches and individuals can no longer say to denominational employees, 'Here's my money. Go and do ministry for me.'"

"It's almost as if we Baptists have made of missionaries what Catholics used to make of priests," she said. "I believe every Christian can and should do missions."

In light of such changes, Baldrige said forums need to be created for missionaries, pastors and other church leaders and missions administrators to learn from one another. Partnerships must also be explored to "create meaningful missions experiences that meet strategic goals of both churches and missionaries," she said.

Baldrige encouraged Baptist pastors to praise families in their churches who are involved in volunteer and missions work and to "recognize missions as a lifestyle."

Churches should also become experts on an issue or people group, and then carry that from local to global ministry, she said.

An AIDS ministry, for example, can have local, national and global dimensions. Most urban areas now have pockets of international populations, still connected to families and friends abroad, often in close proximity to churches.

"What happens in your community is linked to people and events all over the world," she said.

Baldrige said she disagrees with Henry Blackaby's advice to find out where God is working and then join him. "I have never found a place, in my experience or in talking with others, where God is not working," she said. "People are receiving his kingdom and people are entering it," she said. "It is our privilege to see it happen and to cultivate it."

Baldrige challenged pastors and church leaders "to lead our people to be missional by example."

"Today the world's population officially reaches 6 billion. To me it means there are more people who need to know God's love."

About 70 people attended the two-day conference at Christian Fellowship Baptist Church in Atlanta. The Nashville, Tenn.,-based Baptist Center for Ethics, was sponsor.

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Vestal hopes planning process will focus CBF on the future

By Bob Allen

ATLANTA (ABP) -- The coordinator of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship predicted a long-range planning process kicked off in June may finally allow the group to shed its reactionary image.

The Atlanta-based Fellowship formed in 1991 following a failed 12-year struggle by moderates to keep conservatives from gaining power in the Southern Baptist Convention.

While remaining at odds with SBC leaders over a variety of issues -- including the role of women and theological education -- the Fellowship has declined to formally declare itself a separate convention.

The organization kicked off a yearlong study involving participants in the group's June 24-26 General Assembly in Birmingham, Ala. The Coordinating Council, the Fellowship's central policy committee, took over the process at its regularly scheduled fall meeting, Oct. 13-16 in Atlanta.

"My own journey with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, as many of you, has been we were born out of controversy and we were born out of a resistance and a protest," said CBF Coordinator Daniel Vestal, a former Houston pastor who became the Atlanta-based Fellowship's top administrator in 1996.

"It seems to me that for seven years, many of us really functioned in this movement ... still in kind of a reactionary mode," Vestal said.

Approval of a statement describing the mission of CBF as "to network, empower and mobilize" Baptists for missions and ministry was "a defining moment for the development of CBF," Vestal said.

As the Fellowship approaches its 10th anniversary, Vestal said, "I believe the challenge for us is to look again ... at the principles that birthed us ... and at the same time redream the dream of the future."

While not forgetting the core values that brought the Fellowship into being, Vestal urged leaders to "dream of what God has for us as a Fellowship" as they map strategy.

"Lord, what is it that you have for us? What are your plans? What is your will?" he asked.

Vestal said he believed God is going to lead the Fellowship through its long-range planning process.

"I have never been more excited to be a follower of Jesus Christ than today," Vestal said. "I've never been more excited to be a Baptist than today, and I've never been more excited to be a part of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship than today."

CBF moderator Sarah Frances Anders said the long-range planning process would push back regular business, likely forcing an extra meeting in March to finish up budgetary and other matters not dealt with when the council meets in February.

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Longtime Baptist editor C.R. Daley dead at 81

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (ABP) -- Chauncey R. Daley, a Kentucky editor whose unflinching editorials in the Western Recorder influenced a generation of Baptist journalists, died Oct. 18 in Louisville, Ky., at age 81.

Daley was considered the "dean" of state Baptist paper editors when he retired in 1984. He edited the Kentucky Baptist newspaper 27 years.

Daley was best known in Southern Baptist circles for his forceful, straightforward editorials on subjects ranging from civil rights to convention controversy.

In his inaugural editorial, Daley wrote: "I can only promise that whatever is said will be honest, sincere and personal convictions. Truth in reporting and sincerity in interpretation of events will be my guiding principle whatever the costs."

That conviction was to be soon tested. Not long after Daley took over as editor, he reported on a controversy that led to the 1958 firing of 13 professors at nearby Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Another time, Daley became incensed when a restaurant refused to serve him because a visiting international dignitary whom he was driving to a Baptist event was black. He wrote about the experience and was credited with influencing the Legislature to repeal Kentucky's Jim Crow laws.

He continued his outspoken stance as an early critic of what came to be known as the "conservative resurgence" in the Southern Baptist Convention beginning in 1979.

Because of such views, Daley was a sometimes controversial but respected figure among the Baptist press. A number of current or recently retired Baptist journalists either worked under Daley or were influenced by his style.

"From C.R. Daley I learned fresh and new definitions of integrity, of courage, of commitment above expediency," said R.G. Puckett, editor emeritus of the North Carolina Biblical Recorder who worked as Daley's associate editor between 1963 and 1966.

"I learned the Baptist state-paper editor must speak his mind, address the issues, strive humbly to produce change in Baptist attitudes and priorities, regardless of the amount of hate mail which flows from a powerful editorial or a whole-truth story," Puckett said.

During a banquet last year honoring Daley, his son Gil noted that Daley "never minced words" as a preacher, teacher or editorialist. "His philosophy was always to give Baptists all the facts and let them make up their own minds."

"Daley Observations: The Best of C.R. Daley's Western Recorder Editorials," was published in 1998 by Providence House Publishers. The book, edited by A.B. Colvin and Mark Wingfield, was published in honor of Daley's contributions to Southern Baptist journalism.

"The legacy of the Daley years with the Western Recorder is rich, and it is a resource from which we all continue to benefit," Wingfield wrote in the book's forward. Wingfield, also a former editor of the Western Recorder, is managing editor of the Texas Baptist Standard.

"Kentucky Baptists and Southern Baptists have lost a treasure with the death of Dr. Daley," said Western Recorder editor Trennis Henderson. "I am thankful that his written words remain available to challenge and encourage future generations."

Daley, a native of Georgia, was a graduate of Mercer University in Macon, Ga., and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville. He was pastor of Harrodsburg Baptist Church and professor of Greek, Latin, Old Testament and philosophy at Georgetown College before becoming editor of the Western Recorder.

He is survived by his wife, Christine, and four sons: Gil, Mike, Dale and Phil.

Memorial gifts may be made to the C.R. and Christine Daley Endowment Fund through the Western Recorder. Funeral arrangements are pending.

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-- By ABP staff

Divinity school opens at Wake Forest with commitment to pluralism

By Greg Warner

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C. (ABP) -- Wake Forest University officially opened its new divinity school Oct. 12 with a pledge to prepare ministers for an uncertain future.

"We are sorting out identities in the midst of changing times," said Bill Leonard, dean of the 24-student divinity school, located on the Wake Forest campus in Winston-Salem, N.C.

Among the forces that will shape that future, he said, are religious pluralism and the decline of traditional denominations.

In his convocation address, Leonard said the school is committed to reflecting -- and wrestling with -- the religious pluralism that will dominate the American religious scene in the next millennium.

"Religious pluralism seems a given in American society," he said. "There are Buddhists in Berea, Ky., Hindus in Jacksboro, Texas, ... and an Islamic Center in downtown Asheville, N.C. If folks from those religious traditions have found their way to Berea, Jacksboro, and Asheville, they are everywhere."

Many students now come from families with multiple faith traditions, he said, and many ministers will change denominations sometime during their careers.

Teaching ministers in such a setting, Leonard said, "means living in multiple worlds, preparing students for ministry in a pluralistic environment, while encouraging them in their own search for theological and spiritual identities."

It also means living in controversy, he said. "If the histories of the other theological schools suggest anything for Wake Forest University, it is this: Open a divinity school and duck! Controversy will strike immediately, if not sooner."

Rather than avoiding controversy, Leonard said a divinity school should provoke and challenge. "Sooner or later, all good 'instruction' involves 'provocation,' pressing us beyond our certainty, and ourselves, demanding more than we ever dreamed possible."

Wake Forest Divinity School, which began classes in August, likely won't have to look far for controversy. The inaugural class includes 19 women, one of whom is a lesbian. Meanwhile, Wake Forest Baptist Church, an autonomous local congregation that shares a building with the divinity school, plans to hold a marriage-like ceremony for a gay couple. Trustees of the university, which has a non-discrimination policy that includes sexual orientation, have asked the church not to hold the ceremony in the university-owned Wait Chapel.

Leonard addressed both issues in his convocation message.

"Three years ago a lesbian woman asked me, if accepted, would she be welcomed for what she would bring to this school. Tonight she sits here as part of our entering class."

He alluded to the controversy over the same-sex union and commented: "As dean of a fledgling school where studying Old Testament, New Testament and theology are stressful enough, I'd just as soon those issues would have been delayed for awhile -- like maybe 100 years. As teacher, historian and Baptist, I know that controversy waits for no one, so we might as well talk about it."

The two-day inaugural celebration culminated more than 10 years of preparation for the new school, which was approved by Wake Forest trustees in 1989. The convocation ceremony, which drew representatives from 53 other universities and seminaries, included a reading by renowned poet and Wake professor Maya Angelou and remarks from academic and university officials.

Wake Forest President Thomas Hearn Jr. said the new school signals "the recovery of a founding purpose" of the 165-year-old university. Although the founders saw the university "as an extension of the mission of the church," the line between faith and reason has since been "starkly drawn," he said.

The divinity school's task of balancing the claims of religious faith and the demands of pluralism "is among the greatest challenges of this century," he said.

"There's probably not a good reason to start a theological school," said Daniel Aleshire, executive director of the Association of Theological Schools, which relates to most of the 200-plus theological schools in the United States. But, Aleshire added, a theological school starts more out of passion and vision than reason.

"Theological schools are about the religious hunger out there, which stews and stirs. ... They are about foundation shaking and faith shaping."

Leonard said the faculty of the divinity school is intentionally diverse -- composed of, as one observer put it, "two feminists, a monk, a controversial expert on religious liberty and two battle-scarred Baptists."

In addition to Leonard, a church historian, the faculty includes Phyllis Trible, associate dean and professor of biblical studies; Frank Tupper, professor of theology; and Samuel Webber, a Benedictine monk and Catholic priest, associate professor of early Christianity and spiritual formation.

Among the three current visiting professors is James Dunn, retired executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs in Washington, D.C.

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