

Perspectives

Baptist Women in Ministry of Georgia | Summer 2013

From the President

Dear Friends,

I am looking forward to serving this year as president of Baptist Women in Ministry of Georgia. It will be an exciting time, for God has also called me recently to be a part of a new church start. I am finding that it is a beautiful calling to pastor a church from its beginning, beautiful but messy. Knowing I have the support, encouragement, and fellowship of others from this organization reminds me that I am not alone. You are not alone either. No matter where you are in ministry, you too have the support of BWIM of GA, and we hope you make a point to connect with its members.

Many of our members gathered for our Spring Gathering on April 13 at First Baptist Church of Christ in Macon. During our worship service, our preacher for the morning, Rev. Ruth Perkins Lee, handed out small mirrors after communion was received. She



challenged us to angle the mirror to see those around us and then to see ourselves. As we did this activity, we were to "breathe in and breathe out the beauty around and within you." Every time I see my mirror now, I am reminded of the beauty I saw around the room that day as ministers from various places in Georgia gathered for worship, celebration, and fellowship. I also remember the beauty of the music that day as led by Kristy Bay, who showed us that old songs could be sung in new

and different ways. At our lunch tables, we shared stories about our places of ministry and service, stories of perseverance and hope, of sadness and growth. They were all beautiful stories because they were our stories.

During our award time, we celebrated the beauty of the lay ministry by presenting Dr. Kay Shurden with the Churchwoman of the Year Award. The beauty of study and future ministry hopes was recognized in Meggie Dant as



she received the Sara Owen Etheridge Scholarship award. Please read more about these two women inside our newsletter. You'll be as inspired as we were with their stories.

At the end of the meeting, new steering committee members were welcomed. Since that spring day, our steering committee and officers met for a meeting to plan upcoming events throughout the year. As I listened to each of these women's stories, I have seen beauty in their dedication for this organization and our service to each of you who make up BWIM of GA. I am thankful to serve alongside these wonderful women.

We will gather again on November 3 at 5 p.m. just prior to the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Georgia's fall assembly. Until then, my friends in ministry, keep breathing in the beauty of God around and within you!

In Christ,
LoAnn Gunter Johns

Welcome New Steering Committee Members!

Jessica Asbell, Minister to Children, First Baptist Church Roswell

Sarah Holik, Minister of Preschool, Children, and Senior Adults; First Baptist Church, Fitzgerald

Allie C. Kilpatrick, Hospice Chaplain and Sunday School Teacher, Senior's Group President, and Deacon at First Baptist Church Milledgeville

Jen Lyon, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship Field Personnel, Southeast Atlanta

Lindsey Richardson, Interim Minister to Families with Children, Second-Ponce de Leon Baptist Church in Atlanta

2013 Distinguished Church Woman of the Year

"The Distinguished Churchwoman of the Year Award honors the contributions of a Baptist woman who is fulfilling a call to ministry. The 2013 Distinguished Churchwoman of the Year is Dr. Kay Shurden. Dr. Shurden has worked as a therapist and educator in Marriage and Family Therapy and as a lay leader and an advocate for women and in Baptist life."

Well before any Baptist Women in Ministry organization was formed and before the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship was even dreamed about, Kay Shurden was hard at work, serving as an advocate, a spokeswoman for Baptist laywomen and Baptist women ministers. Hers was a frequently heard and much appreciated voice.

In the 1970s, as Baptists began debating and disagreeing about the role of women in ministry, in church life, and in the home, Kay offered a calm, well-informed, articulate voice to what was becoming a heated issue for Southern Baptists. She was a speaker at the 1978 Consultation on Women in Church-Related Vocations, sponsored by the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, where she presented a gender analysis of curriculum materials and periodicals published by the Baptist Sunday School Board. She used that platform to call Southern Baptists to gender equality.

Over the next forty years, Kay continued through her speaking, her writing, and her presence to be a consistent and prophetic voice, giving hope and assurance to women who felt called to ministry. With a gentle and compassionate spirit and with determination and persistence, Kay Shurden has continued to be a voice for us as Baptists, calling us to do better, to be more inclusive of the gifts and graces that God has given to women.

- Pam Durso
Executive Director, Baptist Women in Ministry

Kay has been a member of First Baptist Church of Christ at Macon since 1984, and in that time, she has served in various leadership roles within our congregation. In just the eight years that I have been a minister in the congregation, Kay has served as vice chair of deacons, in adult education, as a volunteer in our church's ministries to the poor, in leading a spiritual direction and formation group for women, as a mentor for a child in our children's discipleship class, in a group that empowers women with opportunities for life skills and training, and more.

Kay's influence as a leader in our congregation, however, is felt in ways deeper than a list of assumed duties can describe. She has been a mentor and an example to many women who have sought to follow God's calling for lay or ordained ministry. She has used her gifts and training as a marriage and family therapist to strengthen individuals and families within the congregation and outside of it. She has been a strong but calm voice in church leadership. In a time when our congregation was considering ordaining women deacons, Kay became one of our church's first images of an ordained woman. She carries much influence because she is deeply respected within our congregation and beyond.

- Julie Whidden Long
Minister of Children and Families
First Baptist Church of Christ Macon, GA



Kay Shurden(center) is joined by Pam Durso (left) and Julie Long (right) to celebrate her award.



What a kind and generous group BWIM of Georgia is! I was overwhelmed by the Spring Gathering offering supporting our ministry in Southeast Atlanta. Part of our summer includes four weeks of Literacy Day Camp for elementary school students in our community who are struggling to read at grade level. As part of the Poverty and Transformation Ministries urban team, we join with our fellow CBF Field Personnel in caring for the marginalized and most neglected in our world. In our community those faces belong to children. With half of Atlanta's children living in poverty, and education being a proven way for a child to release herself from poverty's vise-grip, camps like this are a crucial need. The generous offering you gave is going to fund a week of literacy camp, buying supplies, books, nutritious food and more! Thank you for your kindness and willingness to support kids like Kamaria (pictured with me) as she learns and grows this summer!

- Jen Lyon



2013 Sara Owen Etheridge Scholarship Recipient

The Sara Owen Etheridge scholarship is awarded annually to a Baptist woman who is from Georgia, or currently resides in Georgia, and is enrolled at least her second year of theological studies at the Master's or Doctoral level. The Sara Owen Etheridge Scholarship recipient for this year is *Meggie Dant*.

Meggie has completed her second year of seminary at McAfee School of Theology, where she is pursuing a Master's of Divinity with a focus in Academic Research. Renee Bennett, Baptist Women in Ministry of Georgia Steering Committee member and Assistant to the Coordinator for the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Georgia, says "Meggie epitomizes the qualities BWIM of Georgia has supported through the years and the qualities which will take BWIM into the future." The Scholarship Committee has found this to be true.

Meggie grew up being told that she could be a gifted minister, but she refused such suggestions. However, her call to ministry became evident in her life during her time working as a Bible Study leader for Passport Youth Camps. She writes, "I found myself asking the staffers in seminary or about to begin seminary about how they made the decision to go to seminary...I began to realize that perhaps my consistent refusal to be a minister was because I was afraid of listening to the calling I have been experiencing most of my life. During my second week leading a Bible study, I knew I was right. I stopped in the middle of a lesson because I was caught off guard by my realization that while teaching the students in my Bible study, I was overwhelmed with happiness. Never before had I been so happy and content with what I was doing. I knew right then that indeed I had been called to be a minister."

Meggie's passion for ministry lies in teaching others about the Bible and in preparing other people for ministry. She concludes her application by saying, "I am a gifted teacher and God gave me that ability and passion so that I can be an effective minister, as well as educate and empower future religious ministers." This summer she is serving as a Camp Pastor with Passport Youth Camps. Meggie is indeed gifted, and we affirm her as a Baptist woman called to ministry.

- Rachel Huston

Membership Form

Please complete and return the membership form with you're annual dues to:

Baptist Women in Ministry of Georgia
C/O Darlene Flaming
1400 Coleman Ave.
Macon, GA 31207

Name (Dr./Rev./Mrs./Ms./Mr.) _____

Address _____

City _____ ST _____ ZIP _____

Email _____ PH _____

Church/School _____

Position/Class _____

The fiscal year shall be from June 1—May 30. Dues are payable any time and always renewable on June 1. I am enclosing

\$20 for Regular Membership \$10 for Student Membership

\$ _____ Friend of BWIM-GA \$ _____ Supporter of BWIM-GA
(Individual contributing amount above annual dues) (Church/Organization providing annual financial support)

\$ _____ Gift to Sara Owen Etheridge Scholarship Fund

I'm interested in:

Regional Fellowship (List your region) _____

Save-the-Date! BWIM of Georgia Fall Gathering

November 3, 2013, 5:00 pm

Join BWIM of Georgia before CBF/GA Fall General Assembly Worship for light refreshments and fellowship. Details coming soon!

BWIM Georgia relies on the generosity of our Members and Friends to do the work of encouraging the gifted and called women in our state. Our budget is funded through Members' annual dues and the donations of Friends, outside of annual dues. Become a Member or Friend today!

Thank you, Friends!

Renee Bennett

Eileen Campbell-Reed

Hannah Coe

Billie Cox

Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Georgia

Joan Godsey

Genie Hargrove

Allie Kilpatrick-Hill



Baptist
Women
in Ministry of GA

Helpful Links:

**Cooperative Baptist Fellowship:
www.thefellowship.info**

**Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Georgia:
www.cbfga.org**

**National Baptist Women in Ministry:
www.bwim.info**

**Baptist Women in Ministry of Georgia:
www.bwimga.org**

Upcoming Dates:

General Assembly: June 26-28/Greensboro, NC

**Baptist Women in Ministry Thirtieth Anniversary
Celebration: June 26/FBC Greensboro, NC**

**Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Georgia Fall General
Assembly: November 3-4, FBC Augusta, GA**

**Baptist Women in Ministry of Georgia Fall Gathering:
November 3, 5:00 PM, FBC Augusta, GA**

**Baptist Women in Ministry of Georgia Spring Gathering
April 5, 2014**



C/O Darlene Flaming
1400 Coleman Ave.
Macon, GA 31207