

# Louisiana Fellowship People

 cbfla.org

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## All American Receiver Division One Head Coach College President *Dr. Fitz Hill*

Pictures: Michael Baxley, Arkansas Life

### Together for Hope: Turning Towards Life

Whether turning a life around, turning a college around or turning a community towards new life, Dr. Fitz Hill has lived a life of taking on challenges. Hill will speak at a public rally Friday evening May 1 in Lake Providence, kicking off a weekend of missions and community service events as part of the CBF-LA spring conference.

Hill gained national attention as one of a handful of African Americans to serve as head coach of a major university, San Jose State in California. This came on the heels of a collegiate football career as an All American wide receiver at Ouachita Baptist University and then as assistant coach for eight years at the University of Arkansas.

Challenges came early in his life. When Hill was in college, his father died of cancer and his mother had a debilitating stroke. In the course of six months he was suddenly on his own. To help finance his education, he joined the Army ROTC, was commissioned a second lieutenant, and later served in the First Gulf War, receiving a Bronze Star.

Lessons learned in discipline and delaying gratification "for what's best for the big picture" have served him well. In the pressure cooker 24/7 demands of being head coach at a major university, Hill learned focus as well as the toll it brings in raising a family and personal stress which lowered his weight from 230 to 189.

Now guarding his time with family, a wiser Hill today takes on the greatest challenge of his life: turning around a 124-year-old historic Black college in one of the most dangerous inner city neighborhoods in the country.

Arkansas Baptist College was on life support a little

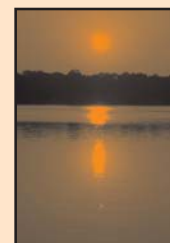
over 2 ½ years ago when Hill came. He has taken enrollment from a low of 183 students to 650 and tripled the operating budget with impressive fund raising.

Of his task, Hill states, "Where most institutions reach out to the most gifted students, ABC has a rich tradition of extending its hand to students who are themselves reaching out to a college to be elevated academically and spiritually. The mission of Arkansas Baptist College aligns with my personal life's work: to make a difference in the lives of those who need it the most. I welcome this awesome venue as an opportunity for me to lead by serving our students and our community, because servant leadership is all about the students and the people we serve."

A humorous, challenging, and inspiring man, Hill has a way of pulling in audiences of all types into the world of servanthood and kingdom building where God touches us at the deepest level and commissions us to a joyous higher calling.

Hill's coming to visit Lake Providence promises to energize the community, and boost the work of Together for Hope, in walking alongside local residents. We

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*Together for Hope:  
Turning Towards Life*

**CBF-LA**

**Spring Conference  
Lake Providence**

**May 1-2**

**Speaker: Dr. Fitz Hill**

Rev. Enola Lee, of the Dowey-Gaston A.M.E. Church, Madisonville, knocked on the backdoor of Bridgewater's Friendship House, at the opposite end of the block. Holding an unlit candle in one hand, she explained: "I have a candle. Do you have a match?" That question would turn out to be prophetic.

Three years ago, Enola was appointed by the A.M.E. Bishop to what was then a dying church. The small congregation, housed in an old brick structure, was soon thereafter flooded by Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Gustav. In fact, three distinct watermarks can be seen clearly on the ends of each pew. What a way to begin one's ministry!

Until Enola knocked on our door, looking for "a match," we had not met her. She lives in New Orleans and, when she's around on Sundays, we are blocks away at our worship site.

After that first encounter, two of Bridgewater's ladies -- one of whom is a CBF Louisiana Coordinating Council member -- surprised Enola by personally power-washing the exterior of the A.M.E. church's brick building, which was turning green from mildew.

Enola then delighted us by attending Bridgewater's candlelight communion service on Christmas Eve, before walking down the street to her own service at the A.M.E. church, accompanied by several Bridgewater members.

Later, during a Bridgewater Men's Prayer Breakfast at the local Piccadilly, several signed up to help with disaster response renovation inside the old church. We will replace doors, windows, bathroom fixtures, window units, paint and possibly ceramic tile on the floor, an upgrade from the carpet removed after Katrina. We realize the building will flood again, possibly this year, and are factoring that into the decisions.

Last week, a Baptist Student Ministries group from Texas called to ask if we could use some help with this project. Shannon Rutherford, of University Baptist Church, Baton Rouge, had told her friend, Shawn Shannon, about it. This group will arrive in mid-March and will focus, among other things, on refinishing the twenty-four pews.

Reverend Enola Lee now has thirty young people, along with twenty adults, involved in the church's ministries. We envision our folks working side-by-side in the days ahead.

Enola and I will be reviewing the newly released and award-winning DVD titled: "Beneath the Skin: Baptists & Racism," produced by the Baptist Center for Ethics, and will create an opportunity for our respective congregations to dialogue with one another about its content.

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## Winds of the Spirit

Reid Doster, CBF-LA Coordinator

In the meantime, Bridgewater Church has been blessed to receive our first African American member, George Johnson, who moved to Madisonville from New Orleans.

With tears in his eyes, George explained to our congregation: "I live right across the street from the Museum and Sunday-after-Sunday have been hearing you all sing. I wanted to come in, but did not know if I would be accepted. I was raised in the church, am new to the community and am looking for a church home."

By the way, another young man and his wife, not then official "members," of Bridgewater invited George inside. All three joined that same morning.



Reid with Enola Lee, 2nd from right & AME church members

Rev. Cindy Graves, wife of Mulberry Baptist Church's pastor, Steve Graves, and an ordained minister in her own right, serves as liaison to homeless students in a local school in Houma.

A ladies Sunday School class from First Baptist Church, Covington, where I used to serve as pastor, contacted me "because we hear you are involved in helping a lot of people."

This class sent money for CBF to distribute, mainly in the form of gift cards, to people in South Terrebonne Parish who had lost most everything following Hurricane Gustav. One lady offered furniture and Steve and Cindy were met by some of us from Bridgewater at the lady's storage unit in Mandeville. The Graves' truck and trailer could not handle all the furniture in one load.

Cindy says they have identified two more families who lost everything and also need basic furnishings. I am wondering if you might be willing to help. It would be great if we could fill three disaster response trailers with good, usable items for people who have little left since Gustav. Please be thinking about something in your home or storage that is in good shape, but not really being put to good use. Remember, sometimes less is more. Give until it hurts a bit. Letting go can be therapeutic!

Steve and Cindy will be special guests of CBF National in Atlanta next week, as they attend a young leaders listening session, led by Terry Hamrick.

Steve is letting us "borrow" Mulberry's baptistry next Sunday afternoon to immerse two of our newest members. Last Sunday, we "sprinkled" two others during the worship service. Isn't it wonderful to celebrate "soul

freedom," "priesthood of the believer" and local church autonomy? That's reason number 99 why I support the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

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I recently befriended a young man who is trying to plant a new church in our area. He and his wife were on-track to serve a well-known denomination but, after being strung along for quite some time, were informed they would be disqualified because one of them had gone through divorce years ago. Who knows where this all might lead, but we can certainly be the presence of Christ to them and reflect God's redemptive love.

I have given him a couple of books that helped me with our new church start and have invited them to a dinner which Jarrett Banks and I are pulling together for CBF Pastors, staff and guests in celebration of our growing fellowship. We will "pass a good time," while sharing what the Lord is doing in our churches.

Jarrett, pastor of Broadmoor Baptist in Baton Rouge, Bobby Rayburn, Broadmoor's Minister to Youth, and I will be going to Bogalusa this week to meet another pastor who has also been kept at arms length by that same denomination for similar "reasons." This passionate bi-vocational pastor, well-respected in the community, has developed a strong ministry to Bogalusa youth.

CBF Louisiana is making new friends throughout the state. In addition to Steve and Cindy, Tom Smith, Pastor of Open Door Church, Coushatta, LA, and James Welch, Pastor of Sojourn Church -- recently merged with Lakeview, New Orleans -- are among them. I will bring you up to speed on other developments in upcoming articles.

One of my goals when becoming Coordinator last April was to see the number of our participating churches increase by 50% within one year. By God's grace, that dream just might become reality.

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We believe our 2009 Spring Assembly, in Lake Providence, will be a defining event for CBF Louisiana, and will set new directions for our Fellowship. Please block off May 1 & 2 on your calendar.

You will be inspired by Dr. Fitz Hill and the miraculous story of Arkansas Baptist College. Warning: his enthusiasm is infectious!

Come catch the wind of that Spirit. Prepare to lash yourself to the mast, soak in the ocean spray, and ride out the waves, as we plow new waters toward a compelling vision of our future.

Grace and peace. Reid



Left to right: George Johnson; Bridgewater's Intern, Zac Ritchie; Steve and Cindy and their girls

**Cont'd** also hope to introduce a new TFH missionary at the conference!

On Saturday, Dr. Hal Bass, National CBF Moderator and Professor of Political Science at Ouachita, will be joining the meeting and leading us in discerning the Spirit's path in our

movement.

CBF-LA is issuing an "All Church Challenge" in support of the weekend activities. Housing and mission opportunities will be posted later this month at [www.cbfla.org](http://www.cbfla.org).



Hill has raised millions of dollars to renovate the 115-year-old Main Hall, and recently secured a \$2.5 million gift for a men's dorm.



Hill started a football program to encourage male applications — but holds to the mantra: "No Books, No Ball."



Hill cherishes time with his children: Destiny, Faith and Justice. His wife, Dr. Cynthia Hill directs Student Support Services at the college. "It's great to have her there," Hill says, adding that the symbolism alone is important on a college campus in which the student body is two-thirds male. "Seventy percent of African-American families are led by women. Many times, these kids don't know how a husband and wife work together or head a family because they've never seen it."





**St Charles Avenue Baptist Church will host its annual Jazz Service Sunday, February 22, 9:00 a.m. with Dr. Michael White & The Original Liberty Jazz Band.**

This traditional service will be a joyful outpouring of sound, where the music will enliven and enhance worship.

It is the 15th year of this special outreach of the church during the Mardi Gras season. King Cake and coffee in the courtyard will follow the service. For information call 504-861-9514.

**Resumes are being accepted for Together for Hope Missionary Position**  
 Send to: [cbflouisiana@gmail.com](mailto:cbflouisiana@gmail.com)  
 Information at [www.cbfla.org](http://www.cbfla.org)

**Please pray for our Missionary Search Committee:**  
 Mike Anderson, Sharon Potts Carroll, Kenny Crump, John Henson, Ted Holmes, Kyle Kelley, Redean Parsons, Shannon Rutherford, Tom Smith

**Holmes/van Rheenen:**


- Keith's hearing is improving
- New evangelistic outreach has begun
- New Acts video ready for preview.
- You have donated enough to provide Petru & Olesea Ciocchina's (new Bethlehem pastor) salary for a full year. Long-range plans for outreach include leadership training, education, & economic development.
- During our recent meeting, the Romany Team added social justice to our core strategies priorities. The European Roma Information Office ([erionet.org](http://erionet.org)) is a source of information for these issues.
- Thank you for continuing to contribute to core strategy #1, prayer.



**Romany Mission News**  
Full updates at [cbfla.org](http://cbfla.org)

**Glen & Clista Adkins:**

- Clista accidentally enters/ wins cooking contest at Gypsy school!
  - Students overwhelmed with joy at gifts.
- "Even with all of these wonderful gifts of cards, socks, fleece, games, frames, gloves and scarves, sweatshirts, there is room for you to help. The need is huge. Eszti has told me that over 70% of our students arrive like "Isti", with nothing to their names except the clothes on their bodies. That is why most students are wearing the same clothing in every picture! Therefore, the school scrounges for used clothing, sweaters, and basic toiletries for about 220 students every year.....So, the physical need is always present and intense..."
- "Almost daily, we are confronted by new challenges and find ourselves mentally floundering. Invariably, we open ourselves up to guidance from God and find ourselves "lifted up" in spirit and filled with a peace that can come only from God, through your prayers. So, we find ourselves constantly thankful for God's steadfast love and your steadfast prayers."



*Keep your eyes on the prize!*  
Give to CBF-LA

I want to be part of something new God is doing through CBF-LA:

CBF-LA Ministry Budget \$ \_\_\_\_\_       New Church Start \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Together for Hope Rural Poverty \$ \_\_\_\_\_       Disaster Relief \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Your name (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

**Make checks payable to CBF of Louisiana, 2220 South Vienna Street, Ruston, LA 71270**  
*You may also give on-line at [www.cbfla.org](http://www.cbfla.org).*

**Mark the date: July 2-3**



**Cooperative Baptist Fellowship  
 General Assembly  
 July 2-3, Houston, Texas**

**Welcome to your neighborhood:**  
 a new one, a global one, one where we're all connected, one where Christ's compassion extends to our neighbors down the street and around the world, one where we are changed as God changes lives through us, and one where - as one - we can make a world of difference.

Come this summer to a city as diverse as Houston, where you can embrace the world by getting to know your new global neighbors. Hear from them why this fellowship movement called Cooperative Baptist Fellowship matters, and leave the Assembly knowing you are part of this growing movement of God in the world.

**IDENTITY:**

We are a fellowship of Baptist Christians and churches who share a passion for the Great Commandment and the Great Commission of Jesus Christ and a commitment to Baptist principles of faith and practice.

**VISION:**

Being the presence of Christ in the world.

**MISSION:**

Serving Christians and churches as they discover and fulfill their God-given mission.

CBF-LA Receipts	Dec-Jan	Fiscal Year 7/01/08-6/30/09
Undesignated	\$14,671.00	\$43,005.18
Together for Hope	\$883.34	\$9,223.26
Stagg-Tolbert Forum	-\$2,595.20	-\$3,522.53
Other Designated Funds	\$500.00	\$1,219.37
TFH Missionary Fund	\$2,000.00	\$40,000.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$15,509.14</b>	<b>\$90,055.28</b>

*Louisiana Fellowship People*  
 Sent to you free for the asking.

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**Larry Davis, Moderator Elect**

**Jay Hogewood, Past Moderator**

**Charlene Kelley, National CBF Representative**



**Partners in Prayer Calendar**

Omitted names due to sensitive nature of work.

**FEBRUARY**

- 3 Philip Whisnand, urban work, Seattle, WA
- 11 Donald Barnes, English teacher, China
- 11 Derrick Togba-Doya, 2001, son, Calandra & Jessy Togba-Doya, Liberia
- 12 Louisa Houser, 2004, daughter, Ana Marie & Scott Houser, Southern Africa
- 17 Nancy James, holistic health ministry, Haiti
- 19 Keri Spears, urban work, Miami, FL
- 21 \_\_\_\_\_, son, unevang people group, N Africa
- 21 Wes Craig, Romany people, Romania
- 27 Lori Myrick, medical work, Kenya

**MARCH**

- 3 Emmanuel Aldape, 1990, son, Eddie & Macarena Aldape, India
- 4 Jane Martin, Emeritus, retired June 1994
- 6 Ronnie Adams, urban work, New York, NY
- 7 Duane Binkley, refugees, Uniontown, OH
- 8 Benjamin Burnette, 1993, son, Ellen & Rick Burnette, Thailand

- 8 Isaac Pittman, 1999, son, Angel & Jason Pittman, Florida
- 9 Calandra Togba-Doya, transformational development work, Liberia
- 10 Joshua Ballew, 1992, son, Larry & Sarah Ballew, China
- 12 Melin, unevangelized people group, Asia
- 12 Leah Crowley, Open House Ministries, Homestead, FL
- 15 Sean Binkley, 1988, son, Duane & Marcia Binkley, Ohio
- 15 Carita, artist in residence, Southeast Asia
- 15 Matthew Myrick, 1991, son, Lori & Tim Myrick, Kenya

**15 Mary van Rheenen, work with Romany people, Europe**

- 21 Brandon Turner, urban work, Wash. DC
- 25 Jade Acker, development work, Uganda
- 26 Dan Tucker, coordinator, Tuxpan, Mexico
- 27 Ron, unevangelized people group, Asia
- 28 Aaron Glenn, internationals, Los Angeles
- 28 Megan Whitley, 2002, daughter, Joel & Tiffne Whitley, Spain
- 30 \_\_\_\_\_, son, unevang people grp, Mid East

Save a Tree.  
 Save CBF-LA Some Dough.  
 Receive our newsletter by email in PDF format. Sign up at [cbflouisiana@gmail.com](mailto:cbflouisiana@gmail.com).