

# LOTT CAREY Herald

Published by the Lott Carey Foreign Mission Convention

December 2011

## Journey to Shared Global Service

*Testimonies Reveal the Power of Lott Carey's  
Pastoral Excellence Program*





## CONVENTION EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

### President

Dr. Robert G. Murray

### First Vice President

Dr. Gregory K. Moss

### Second Vice President

Dr. Alyn E. Waller

### Chairman, Board of Directors

Dr. John M. Alexander Jr.

### Vice Chairman, Board of Directors

Dr. David C. Forbes Sr.

### Chairman Emeritus

Dr. Norman W. Smith

### Executive Secretary-Treasurer

Dr. David Emmanuel Goatley

## WOMEN'S AUXILIARY EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

### President

Mrs. Antoinette Winslow

### First Vice President

Mrs. Debra Garner

### Second Vice President

Ms. Carol Mohamed

## LAYMEN'S LEAGUE LEADERSHIP TEAM

### Team Leader

Mr. Bernard Lott

### Short-Term Missions

Mr. Gregory Gabriel

### Special Projects

Mr. Tony Taylor

### Recruitment

Mr. Lawrence Campbell

## INTERNATIONAL YOUTH DEVELOPMENT LEADERSHIP TEAM

### Team Leader

Rev. Trevor Beauford

### Associate Team Leader

Ms. Camille Anderson

### Associate Team Leader

Ms. Amanda Haines

Lott Carey

# Table of Contents



**Larry Branch:** "I was reinvigorated in my faith and determined to be more diligent in my relationship with God."

3

**Robert G. Murray:** "Our challenge, as a Lott Carey family, is to sustain this program because a 'healthy pastor will build a healthy church.' I join Dr. Goatley in challenging the alumni of PEP to sustain this program for another three years."

4

**Earlene Coleman:** "I have learned I cannot help others if I do not reflect on the goodness of the Lord for myself and globally."

6

**Duane Kay:** "I had basically reached a point of stagnation on my pastoral journey. But God was providing a catalyst through the phone conversation with Dr. Goatley, who introduced me to the Pastoral Excellence Program."

7

**Edward J. Morris Sr.:** "Singing and preaching, Praising and dancing/Questions and answers . . . laughter and tears/There were butterflies dancing among the callaloo." Poetry.

10

**Helen N. Orme:** "To live the mission: Pastors caring for One Another and the Wider World/To Get Lost in a Glass of Water; And to Watch up Jesus." Poetry.

11

# BUILDING NETWORKS, BROADENING VISIONS, DEEPENING IMPACT

*Lott Carey's Pastoral Excellence Program is making a difference*

In 2002, the Lilly Endowment received more than 700 responses to its Sustaining Pastoral Excellence Initiative. Sixty-three projects were awarded \$84 million in amounts from \$250,000 to \$2 million. The Endowment believes that healthy communities need healthy churches, and healthy churches need healthy pastors. Part of being a healthy pastor involves intentional networks and practices of excellence, which is why the Lott Carey's Pastoral Excellence Program fosters powerful benefits:

- Healthy peer-mentoring networks and a growing global vision of ministry that are essential for good and faithful pastoral ministry.
- Pastors who participate in effective cross-cultural ministry immersions expand their visions of ministry, enlarge their breadth of work, and energize themselves through their engagement with colleagues who serve in different contexts.

Engaging in vision broadening experiences with peers who are interested in similar opportunities of growth and engagement builds relationships and friendships that allow for peer mentoring and immeasurable degrees of support.

The program combats dangerous trends that may develop:

- Serving in isolation instead of collaboration will ultimately injure a pastor's person and work.
- Losing oneself in one's congregational context rather than seeing the global connectedness of the church and pastoral ministry will stifle a pastor's

efficacy.

These are some of the convictions that drive our PEP, and for nine years, nearly 200 pastors have been blessed to support each other in building networks, broadening visions, and deepening impact.

Through the generous support of the Lilly Endowment, and with the leadership of Rev. Brenda K. Harewood, Program Director, and Dr. Sheila K. Robbins, Program Manager, Lott Carey Foreign Mission Convention has invested in scores of pastors through executing multiple ministry immersions in African and African Diaspora contexts with consistent peer groups for mentoring and networking.

The positive relationship between breadth of vision and depth of impact is affirmed time and again by pastors and churches connected with Lott Carey. Pastors who engage in ministry alongside international peers in various cultural contexts through Lott Carey travel opportunities testify to transformation and reinvigoration. The program has made impact through service-learning immersions in Guyana, Italy, Jamaica, South Africa, and Zimbabwe; through peer mentoring and leadership development; and

through a closing convocation at which pastors make covenants for continuing practices of excellence discovered through the program.

Our initial grant of nearly \$2 million and a second sustainability grant of nearly \$1 million have enabled us to experience nine years of incredible nurture and important learning. Rev. Harewood and Dr. Robbins have led workshops and written articles that have enlarged our circles of influence in creative programs for strengthening the ministry of pastors.

Our current challenge is to sustain the program without the outside support of the Endowment. This edition of the Lott Carey Herald is designed to highlight some of the incredible impact this program continues to make in the lives of many pastors. As you read these testimonies, I hope that you will be inspired to help us invest in larger numbers of pastors who can increase their impact in the congregations they serve, their communities, and the world.

Grace,

*David*



## Reinvigorated Faith Follows PEP Talk

**By Larry Branch**

Participating in the Pastoral Excellence Program (PEP) has been a life-altering experience. My church and my ministry will never be the same. It was exciting and exhilarating to realize the great commission in Matthew 28:19: "To go into all the world and preach the gospel." I believe that the invitation to participate in the program was orchestrated by God. I had just completed an undergraduate degree in Biblical Studies and had a desire to go on a mission's trip. I had never been outside of the United States and I must admit that a bit of nervousness accompanied my excitement. The knowledge that I would be traveling with a number of pastors from

around the country enhanced my excitement.

The PEP program allowed me to minister in Guyana, Jamaica and South Africa. As an African American I was curious to see the plight of Africans and descendants of Africans residing in Guyana and Jamaica and to visualize how their experience paralleled that of Africans in America. I found that the colonization of Guyana and Jamaica and the importation of Africans to work in the fields for the Europeans did have a familiar ring. The racial divide was similar as Africans were exiled to inferior positions socially, economically, educationally and religiously. Consistent with the experience in America, many of the Africans became Christians after being introduced to Christianity by their slave masters. Although being Christian

allotted some Africans status in these countries, it did not make them equal or give them freedom.

Today, Guyana and Jamaica are dealing with the aftermath of slavery and African descendants who now govern their own lives." I could see the similarity of the struggles that confronted the Africans in these countries and the Africans in America. I could also see that like Africans in America the relationship with Christianity and God provided strength for their survival. I relished the opportunity to add to their faith.

I found in Guyana and Jamaica people with a great commitment to Christianity. These countries, especially Guyana, were challenged with

Continued on Page 5



# Thanks to PEP, I “sat where they sat”

**By Robert G. Murray**

“I sat where they sat” (Ezekiel 3:15) refers to pastoral identity with parishioners. Certainly, there is a sense in which ministry and mission bring us together as we do God’s will and work, but I believe that an immersion experience will bring you to a “sit where they sit” understanding. It is one thing to talk about, preach and teach the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20), but it is another thing to experience.

For six years I had the honor to collaborate with some of our Lott Carey international mission partners, the result of a grant from the Lilly Endowment written by Dr. David Emmanuel Goatley. I was one of six ministers chosen to be a team leader for this unique program called the Pastoral Excellence Program (PEP).

Let me state up front the purpose of this article is to:

1. Solicit your Financial Support to maintain this Most Valuable Ministerial Program with only \$3000 per year for the next three years.
2. Share how extremely rewarding this PEP Program has been for me as President of Lott Carey.
3. Prayerfully convince you of the far reaching rewards of this PEP Program to alumnus pastors,



the comfort zone of home (the U.S.) was our orientation, but our immersion mission travels over a three-year period to Guyana, Jamaica, Zimbabwe and South Africa would create an atmosphere of disorientation from our usual sense of comfort. We were reoriented, but I learned some new and interesting things about myself; it was truly a prophetic experience of

these past three years of immersion, the program provided insightful opportunities to study and refresh our thinking about ministry – the didactics were great moments for us to not only read and study what was going on in our field but to hear about the great work being done by those ministers and pastors around the USA.

Our existential group time allowed us to be candid with each other and we discovered that none of us are free of any headaches and some of us even had a few “migraines.” I believe that the consensus opinion is “there is nothing easy about ministry and you better know Who called you and Who you have to call on!” Here is where “sitting in similar seats” was interesting as the blessing to be able to share candidly and honestly might have helped someone to go home another way – they were not just a healthy minister/pastor but perhaps a healthier spouse, or single person, parent, grandparent, son, sibling and citizen of the kingdom. Personally, I think this was my greatest reward in helping a fellow sojourner on this road of ministry.

I believe we are all the better, no matter if we were on the spring or fall team; a young or a young-at-heart minister; female or male; urban or rural pastor; small or large church because our greatest blessing might have been to truly “sit where they sit!” The people of the various countries were great teachers, and in spite of their challenges they would ask us what could they give us. I believe that in their humble spirit they did not see themselves as having a lot to give—but like the Macedonia church, (2 Cor. 8:5) we could see in their worship, in their fellowship and in their service that they gave of themselves. You could not help but admire their love for Christ and their courage to witness. We were the better; at least I know that I was because “I sat where they sat.” I stayed in their homes, ate at their table, preached from their pulpits, visited their parishioners and the truth of the matter is, I learned to love them—my international brothers and sisters—with the love of Christ (John 15:12).

The Pastoral Excellence Program is high on my prayer list because I know the value of it to the local church and to global missions. Recently, I attended the Retreat held by the Lilly Endowment and I was so proud to be a part of the Lott Carey Family as we were recognized among grantees with outstanding commendations like “Lott Carey Project showed us how we

“The Pastoral Excellence Program is high on my prayer list because I know the value of it to the local church and to global missions.”

their churches, future pastors and their churches and our entire Lott Carey family.

I should have known that God was, “up to something,” along with his partner for transforming lives, Dr. Goatley, as the PEP Leadership Team first meeting was not in a large city and a luxury hotel but in a tiny remote town called Tchula, Miss., that seemed miles and miles away from civilization. It was quite evident that we were getting a taste of Walter Brueggemann’s idea of orientation, disorientation and reorientation, a major concept of Dr. Goatley’s proposal for the Lilly grant. Of course,

“sitting where they sat.”

First of all, those six years I was blessed to spend 12-15 days with some of the most outstanding men and women in ministry on the planet. Our teams were led by the most dedicated and capable Rev. Brenda K. Harewood, Director, and Dr. Shelia Robbins, PEP Program Manager. Each team was divided in groups and led by a team leader. During my six years, I can gratefully share that I had two outstanding groups of men and women, and I pray that I have been as helpful to them as they have been to me. With all the teams, including those in

Continued on Page 8

poverty but it appeared that the faith of their people surpassed their level of poverty. In fact, that was the irony found in Guyana: a people with few material possessions who excelled in and were rich in faith.

The people of Guyana worship at churches with soaring temperature and insufficient light. Some Americans would have chosen not to worship in places of this nature. I was embarrassed as I compared myself with them. I went there thinking that I was going to teach them something but they, in fact, became my teachers. I was reinvigorated in my faith and determined to be more diligent in my relationship with God.

Jamaica is a country that is more developed than Guyana. The people are not as poor but they, too, were rich in faith. The immersion in Jamaica called for us to live in the homes of our host. I got an “up close” view of how the people live, away from places frequented by tourists. I was impressed by their hospitality. I also found refreshing the connection that the schools had with the churches in their parishes. Unlike America, which embraces and enforces separation of church and state, Jamaica allowed its pastors access to schools. That gave us an opportunity to minister to students and teachers. As a result I feel more compelled to participate in our local school system. I mentored children in a local elementary school and am seeking to develop stronger connections with that school. Jamaica is certainly a place I could revisit not only for ministry but for the opportunity to revel in its beauty.

Our final destination—South Africa. I’ve always dreamed of visiting Africa, to experience the “Mother Land.” South Africa was most memorable and left an indelible imprint on my mind and my spirit. I was surprised at a level of modernization that was comparable to the United States. I could clearly see the influence of the Europeans in Africa but I was pleased to see how far race relations had come in such a short time after the fall of apartheid—once the country’s system of racial segregation and oppression.

I resided in the home of my host pastor who lived in an integrated neighborhood. The hospitality was exceptional. Pastor Chris Dikana, his wife, Nosimo and I continue our relationship via telephone and the Internet.

What I brought back from South Africa was a sense of origin as I sought to connect with my roots. I was absorbed in the passion and the uninhibited spirit in their worship. I also appreciated seeing the incorporation of some of their traditional dance included in their Christian worship. I was pleasantly surprised when the people of South Africa said that they were pleased to have an African American to come and minister because an African American missionary was a rare sight. I am delighted to have been the “African American” chosen by God to minister to these wonderful people.



The experience of the three ministry immersions allowed me see firsthand the benefits of the work of Lott Carey. I was able to make an impact on my church and other pastors, when I returned to America, as we sought to be more mission minded. As a result the scripture found in Matthew 25:34-40 that ends with, “in as much as you have done unto one of the least of these you have done it unto me,” we have made missions a “practical” and spiritual part of our ministry. We have a food pantry in our ministry that feeds those in our church and community. Our church, along with other PEP pastors have taken part in sponsoring a food program that is now feeding a number of families in Guyana and South Africa. We support Lott Carey and churches that we have established in Kenya since our immersion experiences.

This global mission through Lott Carey and the Pastoral Excellence Program has helped me to teach, preach and practice mission mindedness. It transformed the mindset of our congregation; encouraging them to think globally as well as locally in their efforts to serve and make a difference in the world. Now, we encourage members to get their passports in preparation to serve as missionaries to the entire world. Lott

“I went thinking that I was going to teach them something but they, in fact, became my teachers.”

Carey is doing a wonderful work around the world and it is a pleasure to support this ministry. Many times when money is given to an organization like Lott Carey there are questions about whether the money is being utilized as intended and as designated. With Lott Carey there are no such concerns. The money is used to bless nations! Then, there are the friendships and relationships that have been developed by pastors, leaders and other participants of the program. The PEP program has connected me with people around the country and around the world that I would have never been privileged to meet and my team members will forever be a part of my life.

I am so thankful for the Pastoral Excellence Program. There is not a day that goes by that I am not grateful for the program and the opportunity that it gave me to touch the world and be touched by the world.

---

*The Rev. Larry Branch is Pastor of the Love Center of Unity Full Gospel Church International in Richmond, Va.*



# PEP Vision Allows Pastors to Embrace the World

By Earlene Coleman

Where do I begin? There has been such a great change; I do not know just where to start. But let me begin at the beginning and that is at the place of

Disorientation, Orientation and Reorientation. As I looked at this process, I began to ask what it all meant. But I thank God that as I asked myself these questions, and despite my doubt, I was brave enough to chance it.

There have been so many changes in so many areas that affect my professional life.

Change in my vision and personality. I do not believe my vision or my thoughts were global before PEP. My personal and professional life has been affected as well as my perception of myself. Change in my walk with God and in his word has been heightened as I walk in knowing that all things are possible with God. The Word became a light unto my pathway when I found myself in dark places.

My faith grew, my priorities changed dramatically. I already saw the importance of pushing my youth to stay in school and to get a better education, but after visiting the schools in Guyana and South Africa my passion increased to push them even harder and to help them appreciate the educational blessings they have.

Seeing mothers who can make a life for their families as comfortable as possible with the little they have, enables me to minister with greater compassion to mothers in my congregation. I can tell them about what I have seen with my own eyes and reassert, no matter what, we trust God to bring us through. He will make a way out of no way.

I returned with a greater desire to work outside of my church and to help my community.

I do not believe I would have understood the vision God had for the Noah's Ark Community Center, a community place for young and old, if I had not seen that we can make a difference in the places where we live. We do not have to sit by quietly and do nothing. Where would our sisters and brothers in other countries be if they had done nothing? The greatest thing they did was pray and God heard and hears their cry.

Many of my fears were dealt with which helped me to truly encourage others to move beyond their fears and find their place of blessing. I was enabled to tell my congregation "on the other side of your fears are blessings not only for you, but for those around you." I could



“The church of Jesus Christ extends beyond my front door.”

encourage others to take the leap and take a mission trip that will change their life forever.

I could humbly tell my congregation about people who walk long distances to service. They have no vehicles but they make their way. The

media omits their lives. I watched pastors with more than one congregation to serve move about under less than easy conditions, but go about doing what they do to the glory of God. This encouraged and challenged me to return to where I have a single congregation and good conditions to serve them in, to do what I do to the glory of God. I have learned that no man or woman is an island and in ministry we need each other. We cannot walk this road alone.

Before PEP I just kept going, but I have learned the importance of Sabbath. If I am unable to get away I make sure to take a day of rest and reflection. For I do an injustice to those I serve when I am not at my best. I have learned I cannot help others if I do not reflect on the goodness of the Lord for myself and globally.

The church of Jesus Christ extends beyond my front door. We see church in foreign lands on TV, but the half is not told. The sacrifice, the dedication and commitment is not shown. The need for us to reach out and connect is not told. I did not say “go in with a superior attitude, I came to help you,” no we need to connect and learn from one another.

The connection with Pastors from so many other places, not just in other countries, but right here at home strengthened me to stand in what was a brand new place. I just celebrated eight years as Pastor, and without the experiences from PEP I do not know if I would be celebrating eight years, because pastoring is a great challenge and when you start it can be and is frightening. Taking the challenge of PEP helped me to grow much faster as a brand new Pastor.

There are challenges that I now will take on that before PEP I would not have taken, but because of the experiences of PEP I am willing to accept the challenges of ministry. Although I had already accepted the call to be Pastor of the Bethlehem Baptist Church, it is a frightening place, but through PEP I was re-enforced that even though I don't know, God knows all things, especially the plans He has for me. Thank God those plans are not in my own strength, but in the strength of the God who took me across the world and strengthened me, not just as a pastor, but as a global Christian.

I thank PEP and my congregation and my community thanks PEP for the change and the challenge to realize our community extends beyond our front door.

*The Rev. Earlene Coleman is Pastor of Bethlehem Baptist Church in McKeesport, Penn.*

# PEP Provides Renewed Purpose

By Duane T. Kay

**T**he Pastoral Excellence Program is a great opportunity for any pastor that seeks contexts for prophetic practice, professional development, theological reflection, and personal growth. My relationship with this program began with a phone conversation shared with Dr. Emmanuel Goatley, who encouraged me to apply for one of the upcoming teams back in 2006. I was a bit hesitant about these journeys, but I heeded the advice of a mentor who said, “Duane, you cannot allow your fear to keep you from your mandate.” So my journey toward pastoral excellence was granted an infusion through the opportunities experienced through this program.

In 2006, I felt that I was on an island doing ministry. I felt that ministerial colleagues who served in the same city were thriving in their congregational contexts, and shared a fellowship with one another. Though the congregation that I was serving was witnessing historic growth, I was becoming somewhat dissatisfied, if not disenchanted in my pastoral journey. I was not overwhelmed in my ministry setting, but I was gasping for air, and for some type of catalyst to rejuvenate me within my pastoral purpose. I had basically reached a point of stagnation on my pastoral journey. But God was providing a catalyst through the phone conversation with Dr. Goatley, who introduced me to the Pastoral Excellence Program.

The purpose of PEP—to build networks, broaden visions, and to enhance pastoral ministry for African-American pastors—was custom made for my condition. As I fondly and gratefully remember the immersion experiences of Guyana, Jamaica, and South Africa, I believe that PEP fulfilled its purpose—providing a practical perspective of what it means to be engaged with God’s mission and experience ministry beyond the normal context.

This experience proved disrupting to us, which, in turn, led to disorientation. It takes the pastor out of the comforts of the status quo and



places him or her in ministry situations that are challenging with regards to a different environment. Though disrupting and disorienting the immersion experience allowed me to see the impact and the relevancy of the Gospel from a global perspective. This stretching of my comfort zone gave me the unique opportunity to experience ministry that was collaborative and beneficial.

One of the greatest challenges was being cast in the role of a stranger. As a pastor, I had become accustomed to providing ministry to others and doing so from a position of strength. Though the immersion context provided opportunity for us to engage in ministry, it also forced us to be vulnerable in the receiving of hospitality—eating what was set before us, exposure to unique cultural practices, and engaging in a variety of worship styles. However, by placing us in a position of vulnerability, it created the opportunity for us to become identified with our hosts and their communities. This identification came from our need to depend upon the kindness and compassion of others who were willing to take us in and make us a part of their families. It was through this experience that the practice of biblical hospitality became real to me. The stranger is one of, if not the most, vulnerable person in all of Scripture, a person not protected by the clan, who is far from home and native land. However, the stranger occupied a special place in the heart of God. The practice of welcoming the stranger or offering hospitality was an opportunity for the stranger to become a part of a new clan. In addition, the stranger would often provide for the host some type of blessing or gift. Due to these actions a relationship would be established in which the stranger would no longer be foreign, but instead the stranger would become family. So the role of the host in extending biblical hospitality became an enactor of the will of God.

The Pastoral Excellence Program provided

Continued on page 8

# PEP Helped Enlarge My Vision

By Raymond Bell

**I**t was my distinct honor to participate with 35 Pastors from across the country in the Pastoral Excellence Program, traveling to Guyana, Jamaica and Italy. The experience was insightful and rewarding. To experience the richness of worship and ministry from a unique cultural perspective was profound.

There was a deep hunger for ministry in Guyana, despite weather conditions, transportation or economic restraints. I appreciate the attitude of humility and discipleship. In this South American country, ministry is inextricably bound to discipleship. It is an opportunity to fulfill the call with the highest level of loyalty and devotion. I was so touched by my hosts’ devotion that I started keeping a daily journal of thanks to God. It is inspiring to witness that Guyana’s high level of poverty has not diminished its joy and a love for God.

Professionally, the impact from the Guyana immersion centered primarily on the heart of my ministry and the church I pastor and addressed poverty and benevolence. I began to examine the soul of our ministry as it relates to this issue: where were our weaknesses and how can our ministry have a deliberate impact on local/ foreign missions? Locally, we attempt to tithe and share our resources with the social service organizations, historical black colleges and other agencies within our community. On the other hand, as it relates to foreign missions, we must become more deliberate in collaborations that will assist our Christian friends internationally. In other words, become more consistent and systematic in our giving. And we need to provide educational and mission opportunities for our parishioners to international venues.

In Jamaica, I and five other PEP pastors resided in the home of the host pastor, along with his wife and young son. The experience was memorable. His commitment to serving us as guests in his country, home and local church

Continued on page 8



“I was gasping for air . . . and for some type of catalyst to rejuvenate me within my pastoral purpose.”

what will become lasting friendships and partnerships with colleagues across the country, thanks to travelling with some of this country's best pastors. Hardly a week goes by where I do not have some form of contact with these brothers and sisters. My pastoral ministry and life is enriched by their advice and encouragement. This fellowship initiated through PEP demonstrates the importance of developing fruitful and meaningful relationships with others spreading of the gospel.

As a graduate of the Pastoral Excellence Program, I am now an ambassador of its aims and ideals. My ministry continues to be impacted by the experiences of Guyana, Jamaica, South Africa, and those relationships that were established through a partnering together in God's mission. I recently earned the Doctor of Ministry degree from Wesley Theological Seminary, in Washington D.C., with a concentration in Missional Evangelism. My experience with Lott Carey and PEP, led me to pursue this concentration in an effort to become a greater proponent of God's mission. These experiences also became influential in the completion of my project thesis, entitled, “Speaking Truth to Power: Reclaiming the Prophetic Practice of Advocacy.” I am now serving a new congregation as Senior Pastor and am excited about building this its relationship with Lott Carey and engaging in ministry opportunities beyond our borders.

I am persuaded that my practice of pastoral ministry has greatly benefitted from my participation in the Pastoral Excellence Program. It is my prayer that this program will thrive so that other pastors will have the opportunity to share in these experiences. Anyone who participates will enjoy an enriched ministry.

*The Rev. Dr. Duane T. Kay is Senior Pastor of First Baptist Church in North Brentwood, Md.*

can cross borders literally and figuratively.” Our research and reporting have also been requested and Rev. Harewood and Dr. Robbins have been invited to write a chapter in a book that would be helpful for pastoral peer education and to future studies and programs of the church, but it is not enough to have this work sustained in the Ivory tower. This program is essential for the church! The Lilly grant was extended through 2011. We are not eligible for more funding of this program.

So our challenge, as a Lott Carey family, is to sustain this program because a “healthy pastor will build a healthy church!” This may be one of the foremost reasons to maintain this program. I join Dr. Goatley in challenging the alumni of PEP to sustain this program for another three years. I would hope that the entire Lott Carey Family would see the importance of supporting PEP as we want to:

1. Encourage ministers to be Missional.
2. Initiate ministers in their early years of partnering (first ten years) to have the immersion

community was above honorable. It was clear that we were in Jamaica for ministry, however, the host pastor ministered to us. From preparation of our meals, to one on one consultation, and being educated on the church culture, Jamaican hospitality was clearly exemplified. His hospitality and kindness assisted me through some uncomfortable living conditions—heat and insects. It's amazing what prayer and hospitality can do in difficult situations.

The impact that Jamaica offered me professionally were interesting nuggets. I observed from the Christian school, sponsored by the Jamaican Baptist Church's Consortium, some insightful educational highlights. For instance, allowing their students to share their learning with unfamiliar faces, and providing students the access to travel to different venues within the community to showcase their talents. The church I pastor operates a private Christian Academy and I am thinking about expanding

experience.

3. Provide practical educational opportunities for pastors/ministers to be exposed to the latest information on church life and missiology.

4. Provide an opportunity for an international experience that will enhance the local pastor and engage the local church in ministry.

It is my prayer that we can get at least 300 persons to give \$1,500 per year for the next three years to PEP and that each PEP Alumni would give \$3000 per year for the next three years. Then we will be able to sustain a solvent program. Please, we need you to have these gifts to be given above your current/annual gifts to Lott Carey. We trust that all our PEP alumni who have been the greatest beneficiaries of the Pastoral Excellence Program will respond. If you can make your commitment of gifts and/or pledges to us by December 15, 2011, this will enable us to complete our plans to have a program in place by January 2013.

*The Rev. Dr. Robert G. Murray is Senior Pastor of First Baptist Church, Norfolk, Va., and President of the Lott Carey Foreign Mission Convention.*



Italy was also a unique experience. The language barrier helped me to become more sensitive to individuals who might not know a particular country's primary language. Truly, in the

“How can I assist others in my community with learning the English language?”

this concept. For example, how can our Christian students engage a secular community and share the awesome opportunities and learning they have experienced?

United States I understand what it means to be a minority from a racial point of view. However, living in an environment where everyone is

Continued on page 9



# Bible Lessons Come to Life on Journey

By Leodis Strong

**J**ob and John the Baptist encounter decisive events and experiences which are illustrative of the importance and the impact of the PEP experience, both personally and professionally for me.

Having expressed, extolled, exercised and exclaimed his faith in God to his family and friends, his wife and his workers his children and his community and recognized, respected and revered for his faith in God, Job is plagued by tragedies, disease, and dilemmas which leave him with queries as he tries to remain steadfast and stable in his own faithfulness to God. Job, who once had a surplus and a monopoly of answers for the questions of faith in God, now is bankrupt and bereft of answers and has many unanswered questions of his own. When his property and prosperity perished and his children died, his answer to “why” question was, “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.” When his wife was weakened by grief, wavered in her own faith and wondered about the integrity of Job’s faith, and queried and questioned Job about the integrity of his faith, and “His wife said to him, ‘Are you still holding on to your integrity? Curse God and die.’” Job’s answer to her question, as his wife apparently wavered in her own struggle to be faithful and wondered aloud about the piety and the pragmatism of Job’s faith in God his rhetorical retort in answer to her queries was, “You speak like a foolish woman. Shall we accept the good from God, and not trouble?”

Staunchly, Job once had a surplus supply which he had stockpiled with all of the answers to faith questions which were being raised by others. But now, Job repeatedly enters and exits,



and searches his stockpiled storage of surplus supply of answers to faith questions and finds no answers to faith questions of his own.

When Job was in his quest to be faithful, he is visited by “his three friends” who claim to be God and have answers for all of Job’s questions. Throughout and in the end, Job them as a mismatch to his questions, a misreading of his

quandary and as a parody of the very God whom “his three friends” claim to embody.

Like Job, after years (decades) of praising publicly and privately my faith in God, I found myself in a quandary with late-term personal questions about my own faith walk with God

Continued on Page 16

**Bell:** Continued from Page 8

speaking the language and you can’t is paralyzing. This experience allowed me to reflect on the various ethnic groups in America who do not know English or struggle speaking the language; more importantly, the many times I was impatient or irritated with individuals when they didn’t understand English. Italy opened my eyes and brought to the surface my personal insecurities and insensitivity.

A clear message I received from the Italian immersion was how can I assist others in my community with learning the English language?

More importantly, where and how can I assist African American children to speak better English, and learn a second language? This message motivated me to examine test results of African American males in public schools throughout my community as it relates to their overall communication skills. Our goal is to find constructive methodologies to assist our children to reach their highest potential. Furthermore, the Italian experience offered me moments of reflection on my personal writing/speaking. The opportunity to partner with a translator while preaching was a chal-

lenge. In result, I recall being very intentional in speaking slowly and using short sentences in my oral presentation.

In conclusion, the PEP’s greatest contribution was the opportunity to build relationships with other pastors. Developing relationships that will last a lifetime brought a sense of unity and bonding.

*Dr. Raymond A. Bell Jr. is Senior Pastor of Mount Hope Baptist Church in Fredericksburg, Va.*

# There Were Butterflies Dancing Among the Callaloo Jamaica

**By Edward J. Morris Sr.**

*Overstuffed bags, tickets and flights  
Memos and messages, e-mails and staff  
Rushed . . . Stressed . . . Anxious . . . Perplexed.*

*There were butterflies dancing among the callaloo*

*Ackee and saltfish . . . hills and hovels  
Chocolate tress and Breadfruit  
Curried goat flesh, Rice and Beans, beans and rice,  
Spices, fragrance, strange smoke, smoke familiar*

*There were butterflies dancing among the callaloo*

*Singing and preaching, Praising and dancing  
Questions and answers . . . laughter and tears*

*There were butterflies dancing among the callaloo*

*Trees with strange names, nectars foreign  
Reggae & smoke, Beats and sounds . . .  
Invading . . . pervading . . . capturing . . . evading . . .*

*There were butterflies dancing among the callaloo*

*“Stan a Riva button nuh sun hat”  
(You can’t relate to someone’s experience if you are not in similar conditions)*

*“If you noh mash ants, yuh noh fine him guts”  
(It’s only when you are closely involved with some persons that you are able to really know them)*

*There were butterflies dancing among the callaloo*

*Wanti wanti cyanna y getti, an getti getti noh want  
(Be thankful for the blessings that come to you, always realizing that many of the things taken for granted are luxuries for others)*

*There were butterflies dancing among the callaloo*

*Dare is Wa Ta in the pipes Girl—you better get a run-in.  
No truck again til week next come*

*There were butterflies dancing among the callaloo*

*Play, Worship, friendships, discovery  
Silence, mantra, mazes in the dark beneath the stars*

*There were butterflies dancing among the callaloo*

*Silence . . . MA-RA-NA-THA  
(Come Lord Jesus)  
Centering, listening, palms turned heavenward  
While resting upon the Rock.  
Calling, beckoning, singing silent songs to the dawn*

*There . . . can you hear it?  
Can you see it?  
The flutter of butterflies’ wings.  
Leaf to leaf, plant to plant . . .  
Dancing singing . . .  
Among the Callaloo.  
Welcome to Paradise!!!*

**The Rev. Dr. Edward J. Morris Sr.,**  
left, is Senior Pastor of Parkway  
Gardens Christian Church  
in Chicago.





# O LORD, How Manifold Are Thy Works!

By Helen N. Orme

*O LORD, How Manifold Are Thy Works!*  
*Living under the reign of God in the land of rivers – GMBC*  
*A country of six people unified and free—Guyanese and*  
*Amerindian . . . in a land lush by rain.*  
*The Son shines through their love—Endowed with a divine*  
*synergetic rhythm and flow*  
*Didactic! Didactic! Didactic!*  
*37 pastors orientated—disorientated—re-orientated*  
*Walked down the stairs to board the boat to travel—The*  
*Essequibo and Pomeroon Rivers*  
*Jacklow here we come in the dark of the night—To preach,*  
*teach, sing and share*  
*Worthy is our God, O Lord how manifold are thy works!*  
*Back in the boats flashlight in hand . . . Some barefoot*  
*through the woods . . .*  
*Disorientated—Re-orientated—Orientated*  
*Sing earth sing the ecological song—worthy is our God, O*  
*Lord how manifold are thy works!*  
*Back home re-orientated—Expanded and full—Transformed*  
*with testimonies*  
*Immersed again—Where Lord?—Jamaica Baptist Union*  
*“No Problem”*  
*Kingston, St. Ann and Montego Bay—Jamaica, Jamaica,*  
*Jamaica we love your land*  
*Sing earth sing the ecological song—worthy is our God, O*  
*Lord how manifold are thy works!*  
*Christian Mission—Home visitations, Bible Study and*  
*Church*  
*White sand; fish fry—Open Air meeting—Hear us sing—*  
*Dunn’s River Falls, Ocho Rios, and Runaway Bay*  
*Fruit on the trees outside your door—Jamaica, Jamaica,*  
*Jamaica we love your land*  
*Sing earth sing the ecological song—worthy is our God, O*  
*Lord how manifold are thy works!*  
*Didactic! Didactic! Didactic!*

*Back home orientated—disorientated, re-orientated—Full with*  
*stories and transitioned*  
*Sing earth sing the ecological song—worthy is our God, O*  
*Lord how manifold are thy works!*  
*It is time to go again—this time north—Unione Cristiana*  
*Evangelica Battista d’ Italia—“Si, Si”*  
*Over the waters on Lufthansa to gain an Eschatological View*  
*Here we come!! Up the hill to Suore di Santa Brigida*  
*To live the mission: Pastors caring for One Another and the*  
*Wider World*  
*To Get Lost in a Glass of Water; And to Watch up Jesus*  
*Partake of the GPS—Gelato, Pasta, Peas, Pastries, Pizza*  
*and Salad—The Bridgettine sisters a blessed delight*  
*Sing earth sing the ecological song—worthy is our God, O*  
*Lord how manifold are thy works!*  
*Dispersed into Italy—Christ in us the hope of Glory*  
*Ecumenical—integrating—translating and interpreting in a*  
*Multi-culture context*  
*Theological Colloquium – Discussion Groups— “The*  
*Shack” —Missy and Mac*  
*Captivated in morning glory engaged in the panoramic view*  
*Sing earth sing the ecological song—worthy is our God, O*  
*Lord how manifold are thy works!*  
*Sistine Chapel—Michelangelo naked and not ashamed—the*  
*“Word Made Flesh”*  
*The final dissension upon the spiraling stairs at the Vatican*  
*Museum*  
*Sing earth sing the ecological song—worthy is our God, O*  
*Lord how manifold are thy works!*  
*Uniamoci, amiamoci—Let’s unite, let’s love*  
*Back on the wheel; Clay in the potter’s hand*  
*Mold me! Shape me! To the capacity to pour out that which*  
*was given; treasure in earthen vessels*  
*Sing earth sing the ecological song—worthy is our God, O*  
*Lord how manifold are thy works!*



**The Rev. Helen N. Orme,**  
center, is Founder and Pastor of  
Shekinah Glory Tabernacle in  
Seattle.

# PEP Proves God Still Working On Me

By Robin R. Woodberry

All my life, I have experienced pinnacles of encounters with God. It was at these times that I experienced God in life changing ways. God used these experiences to enrich my life. These encounters with God have moved me from one level to the next in Him. I would have to say that my Immersion in Guyana has been added to that list of experiences.

In 2003 I attended my very first Lott Carey event by taking a group of youth to the Youth Seminar held at Shaw University. I was amazed, excited, overwhelmed and encouraged by all that transpired there. I witnessed youth worshipping, honoring God, fellowshiping and working diligently in the area of missions. They went door-to-door and helped in many ways....no complaints! It was then, that I knew Lott Carey was a ministry that I wanted to be a part of. The very next year, the Annual Session was held in Philadelphia, Pa. This was my first Annual Session and I was eager to see what it was about. I was NOT disappointed! But one of the things I remember hearing about was the Pastoral Excellence Program (PEP). Rev. Brenda Harewood made a presentation on the program and I immediately asked my pastor if I



1. Everyone who attended was there for a purpose. It was ordained for us to meet and bond the way that we did. We needed to have our paths cross. There were things that we were able to receive from each other and give to each other. Our connections will continue to produce in our lives and ministry. I believe God has yet

“I realized how focused I had become on the things that really didn’t matter.”

could be a part of it. But when I inquired, I found out it was only for senior pastors and I was only an associate minister. Needless to say I was bummed. However, some years later Lott Carey provided a PEP Team made up of church leaders and ministers. So in September 2010, I was on my way to a journey that would forever change my life.

I lived 10 days with 21 other people. We all had our own reasons and purposes for being there. In all honesty, I didn’t really know why I was going, just that I needed to. Even to this day, I don’t have a full understanding of it all yet but it continues to unfold all of the time. Here are some things I have learned on my trip:

to reveal His total purpose. As for me, I received personal confirmation for the path God has chosen for me and He used people from our group to encourage me in it.

2. We were all ordained for a greater work and service in Him. Already, we have seen some of our group be “elevated” in their ministries. We were moved into higher callings of service and there is more to come. But the immersion was used as preparation, sanctification and a springboard for us to move deeper in the Lord and ministry. As for me, my shift in ministry has begun as well. In November, I filled in for my pastor for six weeks. Since his return, I have been moved to the role of Assistant Pastor. My

time with God in Guyana helped me develop some things and prepare me for stepping out. He is not through with me yet, so I will continue to follow His lead.

3. We were shown how to have a “real” heart for missions through the leaders that worked with us on our journey. These disciples showed us how to serve with a real servant’s heart and how to use the limited resources to carry out God’s command humbly. They showed us what real service to mankind entailed. As for me, I realized how focused I had become on the things that really didn’t matter. I had allowed myself to become sidetracked on the “business” aspect of the church and I lost focus on the real matter...the people. This immersion helped me to reconnect to the mission that I’ve been called to which is serving people.

4. We were prompted to “remove logs from our fire” in a time of personal spiritual edification. This was such a powerful time in the trip. I believe this to have been a profound time for all of us simply because we can become so task oriented that we don’t make the necessary time for ourselves to be alone with God and to hear from Him. The “removal of the logs” was in reference to a fire that was so overloaded with logs, it did not have room for air to circulate and allow the fire to burn properly. We were commissioned to spend 24 hours in silence. We were not to speak to anyone. That time was solely dedicated to getting quiet before the Lord and allowing Him the time to speak to us. We were able to use that time however we deemed fit. Some people sat along the beach and meditated. Others, spent time in their bungalows away from all the others. Some spent time utilizing the prayers, labyrinth, and study posts that were set up for us. It didn’t matter how we spent our time; we just needed to take steps to get closer to God and hear from Him. As for me, the 24 hour day of silence was a reconnection between me and God. He used that time not just to remove my excessive logs, but reveal what things I needed to be about when I returned home. He used that opportunity to prepare me for the next level He had in store for me. Because of this, I have been spending much more time with Him since I’ve been home. I’ve cut out a lot of TV. I’ve been fasting more, even anointing myself daily. I’ve been journaling again, something which I had become somewhat lax about. God used this time to share His plans with me and prepare me for them.

Continued on Page 16



# PEP Sparks Renewal and Revelation

By Gina M. Stewart

**M**y PEP journey took me to Guyana, Jamaica, Zimbabwe, and South Africa, locales that broadened my vision, built healthy support networks among colleagues, and deepened my dedication to the ministry.

We participated in multiple International Immersion experiences structured around the principles of orientation, disorientation and reorientation based on Walter Brueggemann's book, "The Message of the Psalms." As Brueggemann points out, both in the Psalms and in all of life, people—both individually and in community—go through periods of orientation, disorientation, and back to reorientation:

"When we're oriented, we know where we are and we're certain about our world, life is reflected as a well-ordered world, intended by God—a no-surprise, a 'drama free' world without fear, fragmentation or frustration. A world where there are no intrusions, no interruptions. But when disorientation occurs, people come face to face with the fact that life isn't a neat predictable package."

These discoveries were made as pastors who are accustomed to creature comforts were immersed in a different culture with different language and food, had to adapt to living quarters without hot water, preach in packed school houses without electricity, bands, screens, and microphones, live with host families, have limited access to the internet, cell phones, text messaging, and travel with host pastors to ministry sites sometimes by foot, and motorcycle or bus.

PEP impacted my life in personal and professional ways. When I was initially invited to participate in this experience, I had no previous international exposure to missions and therefore did not know exactly what to expect. In fact, when Dr. Goatley initially contacted me regarding my participation in the Pastoral Excellence Program, participating in a five-year international immersion experience was the farthest thing from mind. I honestly could not envision how I could honor such a long-term commitment. However, as Dr. Goatley shared the goals and focus of the program, he made a statement that arrested my attention: "Healthy pastors produce healthy congregations."

Pastoral ministry is played out in a "stress induced" environment. While we are called to fulfill the primary tasks of ministry, pastors are



often evaluated by secondary or tertiary symbols of achievement—buildings, bucks and bodies, cameras, cars, crowds and cash. This along with attitudes of materialism and consumerism create

and unrealistic expectations of pastors? Where does a pastor get the support that is needed for such a necessary transaction? How is pastoral excellence sustained amid these daunting challenges?

The Pastoral Excellence Program (funded by the generous support of Lilly Endowment) is a gift to pastors that promotes pastoral excellence that Bishop Ken Carder described as invitational, life-giving and formative rather than as a burden that further demoralizes, debilitates and isolates clergy. With a commitment to building networks, broadening vision and deepening ministry, the Pastoral Excellence Program (PEP) program enriched my life as a team member and team leader in the following ways:

Relationship Replenishment and Systems of Accountability: Proverbs 27:17 says as iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another. The opportunity to engage in structured and guided periods of reflection as well as socially and theologically constructive conversations was immeasurably rewarding. Soul searching interaction and honest exchange between colleagues can inspire and lead to transformation. The cultivation of meaningful and mutual peer relationships satisfies a crucial need for pastors amid the on-going and ever present temptation of individualism, self-centeredness and clergy competi-

**"I have been energized and enriched by the privilege of engaging in ministry in an international context."**

significant challenges for faithful ministry. In the words of Dr. Kenneth Hammond, "we are exposed to a ministry that is intoxicated by a prosperity theology."

While all other professions are becoming more and more specialized, clergy is still given the authority to look at the whole picture—one's body stewardship, the quality of one's relationships, one's values, beliefs, and morals. To do well in our generalist role requires that we work diligently to nurture our own well-being in every area of our lives. If we want healthy churches, we must be healthy pastors. But how does a pastor who is already overwhelmed and overextended remain faithful to the incessant demands

tion. Many of the pastors (including myself) experienced significant losses and changes during our travel such as the death of family members, key leaders, personal and family crises, and health challenges. The PEP program provided a "safe place" for many of us who were accustomed to "image management" to remove the "masks" of pretense and be healed. The life-giving, genuine support empowered us to face the challenges with grace and resilience.

The Expansion and Broadening of Vision: The tendency toward self-absorption and isolation that is exclusive to its local context can potential-

Continued on Page 17

# Pastor Grateful for PEP Perspective

By Samuel C. Tolbert Jr.

**T**he Pastoral Excellence Program (PEP) has affected me and my ministry. Personally, I believe the concepts of orientation, disorientation and re-orientation were effective tools for learning during immersion trips. They have influenced me in the following areas: personal care and ministry refreshment time, greater appreciation of my family and their global outlook, greater commitment to mission in my congregation, more global mission focus led by me in the state convention I serve and increased financial support of international missions in the National Baptist Convention of American, Inc. International. My life and professional ministry service have benefitted. I have been totally refocused, refreshed and have a different international mission commitment.

I usually tend to speak my position when I feel it is being challenged. Yet, during PEP, I was coached by the leadership to respect the culture and practices of others. I now have a greater appreciation for the meager lives of others as well as a greater appreciation for my own situation in life. No longer can I take for granted my social and economic status. I think I have been thankful but my exposure has given me more gratitude.

The pastors I was introduced to on the fields are more fervent. I felt ashamed when I com-



pared my commitment to theirs based on my resources. With few resources these workers provided their parishioners without reservations. I have learned that there are pastors in the world without even thinking about the sacrifices they are making.

I have more tolerance in the ministry. Everyone comes into ministry with a set of beliefs. As time goes by these beliefs are either cemented or relaxed based on ministry encounters. PEP has at least given me a different perspective about tolerating the ministry function of others regardless of my positions. My exposure to new cultures has enriched my preaching. I have come to a greater realization about communicating the gospel in a different context; especially when assisted by a translator my own cultural norms may not be as useful. In the midst of all I have alluded to about preaching in different cultures there still remains an appreciation for my own preaching style. I can better appreciate my ministry styles and practices because of my observations of other cultures.

The great people in Guyana have taught me to

the circuit church attached to a pastor who is serving a main church also. In Louisiana, in particular, it is common for pastors to serve many churches. I previously served two churches for a five-year period. Those who are not familiar with this practice cannot understand how this can be done. I witnessed in Jamaica this main church and circuit church practice. I have considered planting another church in another city but have felt lead to serve that congregation as its pastor for about five years. I have been reluctant to take this step but Jamaica has renewed my fervor for the idea. A discussion with one pastor in Jamaica has enhanced my understanding of how to implement such a practice. As such I can now coordinate my associate ministers to do ministry with me.

This may appear to be a farfetched idea, but this is my personal and reflection on my immersion in Jamaica. One pastor in Jamaica will coach me based on his cultural encounters and my experience as the pastor of two churches will be helpful. Many of our churches operated with two to three worship services each Sunday. I have discovered from discussions that each group really portrays the character of a different congregation. They meet at the same place, hear the same pastor, but yet they each have their own personality.

My Italy immersion has really impacted my appreciation for the way pastors there serve. Those who are members of the Italian Baptist Union, all make the same salary regardless of the size of the congregation! There are some strengths to this method of compensation. These are Baptist churches but the terms of service are also limited. Maybe these are the results of the Catholic influence in whose shadow these congregations operate. They also minister as Baptist as an exclusive minority in the midst of Catholicism.

Organization in these contexts does not affect their commitment. In America we have resources available to do ministry. I have a sense of awe as I reflect upon my ministry resources and the lack of these assets in other places. I feel I am doing less with more and my more with less. To God be the Glory for the his blessings through the servants on foreign fields.

These immersions make me more committed to global trips. I stand each Sunday with a heart focused on those pastors who serve in other countries. I would pray for other pastors, but in

**“I have been totally refocused, refreshed and have a different international mission commitment.”**

pared my commitment to theirs based on my resources. With few resources these workers provided their parishioners without reservations. I have learned that there are pastors in the world without even thinking about the sacrifices they are making.

I have more tolerance in the ministry. Everyone comes into ministry with a set of beliefs. As time goes by these beliefs are either cemented or relaxed based on ministry encounters. PEP has at least given me a different per-

adjusted to longer worship experiences. They never appeared to be in a hurry as expressions of adoration for God were underway. I may still hold those worship services I influence to a minimum. However, spending a little more time can be something I can now adjust to without agitation. These people take long walks to get to churches, worship without many common amenities, and are more committed to God than many of us in America.

Jamaica has affected me with their practice of

Continued on Page 18



# PEP Focuses Pastoral Mission

**By Mickael Stephens**

It was indeed an honor to be part of Lott Carey Foreign Mission Convention Pastoral Excellence Program (PEP). It helped fulfill the Great Commandment in the context of the Great Commission. I can still remember one of the most challenging messages delivered by Dr. David Emmanuel Goatley years ago at a convention, “Does God Need a Church?” He emphasized the role of the church in terms of missions and by asking the question “Does God Need My Church?” I concluded that God needs a church that will do the work of the church which includes foreign and home missions.

Broadening your vision was one of the themes of PEP my immersion experience fulfilled that purpose. The mission immersion to Guyana was my first foreign mission trip. Joining with pastors nationwide greatly enriched my life and eliminated feelings of isolation I felt prior to the mission trip. I had the opportunity to share the mission immersion with my older brother, the late Rev. Opio Toure. We shared a call to bring justice and peace prior to going into the ministry. The PEP program taught us more about ourselves in Africa and African Diaspora contexts.

I liked Lott Carey’s philosophy of mission work, ‘extending our witness’ by working alongside host pastors and leaders in programs and activities. mutual sharing encouraged me to recognize the contributions one can learn from our host pastor, congregation and natives of the countries.

In Guyana, “the Land of Six Peoples,” I experienced the richness of a multi-cultural and ethnic groups worshipping Jesus differently. In Guyana often the members of host and local congregations walked long distance for service. Many of the PEP pastors remarked that services in our host/local churches were longer and the services appeared more moving in the Spirit.

During our first reception upon meeting our local pastors they warmly greeted us as fellow brothers and sisters in the Lord without regards to status. The host pastors were open about ministry and shared their experiences while seeking to learn about PEP pastor’s experience in the United States. The songs and dancing was rich and powerful. I can still hear the drums ringing in my mind occasionally when I reflect on Guyana. I had the wonderful experience of ministering with Pastor Sidney Locks, of Greenville, North Carolina at Best Full Gospel Fellowship



Church. The host pastor, Pastor George Li, and his family made sure that all our needs were met. The services were outstanding. The congregation were eager to hear the United States pastors share the Word of God with them. Everyone was willing and glad to share in the worship experience. I was truly blessed by the singing, worship, fellowship and prayers.

During this immersion I experienced a Sabbath Retreat at Lake Mainstay, Essequibo. Pastor Dr. John Thomas Jr., a fellow PEP presented “Finding the Rhythm of the Sabbath,”

**“Guyana opened my eyes to the universality of God.”**

was informative and challenging. I entered into silence with a new purpose for praying and meeting God. In the silence, I reflected on God and I discovered newness silent praise while waiting for Him to speak to me.

The immersion to Guyana opened my eyes to the universality of God and the commonality of worship and mission. It also added new meaning to ministering in PEP. Again one of the great benefits of the PEP program was that it allowed pastors to fellowship, share words of encouragement and times of refreshing. There is something about pastors getting together and sharing stories, techniques of pastoral care and praying for one another. My teammates on Team 5-2 were from different parts of the country with dif-

ferent pastoral experiences shaped by their background, length of time pastoring and personal vision of ministry. We had one thing in common: a growing awareness Lott Carey’s work in these countries and the impact our participation could make in the lives of others and our own lives once we return home.

My pastoral assignment was to a church at Hillshire. Before going to Hillshire, we met at a wonderful church that sat on the top of a hill and back from the main highway. Looking at the unfinished church reminded me of the Ark that Noah built for the great flood. This wonderful church with no windows, and at the time still being completed, showed me the determination of Jamaican people to serve the Lord, reach out to the less fortunate in the community and host us at the same time. Hillshire was another example of that same commitment. The Hillshire church was where a small group of believers held services at a small red school house. PEP Pastors Garfield Cross and Larry Jordan were also part of the ministering team. It was truly a blessing to hear them minister and share tips of pastoral care with me and the people of Hillshire. Can you imagine the delight of our team when we went to the beach area and held an outdoor evangelistic service and three people received Christ as their Lord and Savior?

Being with a host family taught us more about everyday life in the country. My host was a retired school teacher whose local church was

ministering to people facing gang activity, lack of student motivation and parental guidance much as our local church faces in the United States. She provided wonderful meals of traditional food from her culture.

My final immersion experience was in South Africa. I have always felt a strong connection to the nation of South Africa going back to a time when my brother and I worked in the United States for the release of Nelson Mandela. Our faith speaks to us to consider the needs of those who are calling for justice and peace. I had the honor of being hosted by Pastor Morris and Ricky Malepe. Pastors Morris and Ricky were a

Continued on Page 19

**STRONG:** Continued from Page 9

and the expert practice of my faith in ministry to others, as I considered leaving from scientific chaplaincy and a return to being a full-time pastor. Rather than having a facsimile of Job's "three friends", I am happy that I have the Lott Carey Pastoral Excellence Program experience to help me with my questions, my quandary and my quest.

For almost twenty years, I was bi-vocationally employed by the Veterans Health Administration as a clinical Chaplain, Acting Chief of Chaplains and simultaneously (intermittently) as a Pastor of Churches with smaller memberships.

During most of that time, my income, independence, and individuality were influenced by my being a Chaplain and Chief of Chaplains to a far greater extent than they were dependent upon my being a Pastor of a Church. And, my pastoral identity, pastoral paradigms, and ministerial models migrated, fluctuated and vacillated back and forth between the clinical context as Chaplain and the Church context as Pastor. Chaplaincy provided more money, but less meaning. Chaplaincy provided freedom from



looked for some type of a structured experience which sort out my views; reality-test pastoral paradigms and ministerial modelstrends and theology in a format which would help me back

In a quandary, with questions and on a quest, my one true friend served me and my personal and professional needs so much better than Job's "three friends" served him in his time of need.

John the Baptist preached, professed, practiced and publicized his faith convictions and commitments to all, one and all when he is imprisoned by King Herod for the practice of his faith, which was anchored in his belief that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, "the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world." At a junction in his journey with Jesus, John wavers and is almost toppled by questions in his faith, ponders and decides to seek out some of his confidants who pledge with him to take a second look at Jesus to help John to progress through the jam he encountered on his journey with Jesus. PEP was creatively crafted to bring together pastoral colleagues in a covenant relationship and as companions to take another look, not only at themes, trends, and topics vital to our theological thinking, but also at ourselves and how we practice our faith.

---

*The Rev. Leodis Strong is Pastor of St. James African Methodist Episcopal Church in Raleigh, N.C.*

## "PEP was creatively crafted to bring together pastoral colleagues in a covenant relationship."

dictatorial bishops, but fewer fulfillments than the long-term relationship with church members and the journey with them; Chaplaincy provided more security than Church, but less satisfaction than the relationship with friends.

But, even with contemplation and consideration of retirement from Chaplaincy and the growing motivation for more meaning, fulfillment and satisfaction personally and professionally, I still had dilemmas which had once helped me to conclude and conceive of Chaplaincy as an alternative to being full-time Pastor.

In a quandary, with questions and still on my personal and professional quest, I longed and

into the Church as a full-time Pastor, holistically homogenizing my best skills, in a way which enhanced the fulfillment and satisfaction (personally and professionally) which I longed to have as I eventually closed out my career as a Pastor.

Conversations with a true friend who was also an alumnus of PEP convinced me that PEP offered a format, didactics and diversity, exposure to and examination of ministerial models and pastoral paradigms, deliberations and discussions, supervision and small groups which could address and accommodate my developmental and transitional needs.

to praise and worship their Lord. They came bringing all they had and that was themselves. There were no typical items. It was simple yet so effective and heart wrenching. They showed me that we put too much emphasis on nonessential things for our worship services. The only real focus should be on worshiping God from our hearts and giving Him the best we have in praise and worship. It was so beautiful to witness such pure worship.

I have been revitalized by my trip. I've also

been humbled as well. Certainly God is not through with me yet nor my brothers and sisters who accompanied me to Guyana.

I pray for the servants in Guyana whom we met and for their work and ministry. I pray that God would continue to strengthen and encourage them to carry out His work.

---

*The Rev. Robin R. Woodberry is Assistant Pastor of New Bethel Baptist Church in Youngstown, Ohio.*

**WOODBERRY:** Continued from Page 12

5. I saw firsthand the desire for worshipping our God by any means necessary. I was able to witness people who would travel long-distances to get to church. This moved me. In America, people take church for granted. But in Guyana, the people there were different. They made their way to church no matter what it took to get there. And when they came, they came expecting to receive from the Lord. They came ready



ly rob a pastor of his/her connection to the larger work that God is doing in the world and result in a parochial or narrow approach to ministry. The nature of pastoral ministry almost by default tends to draw and immerse a pastor into the immediate life of congregations and communities. Pastors can become so consumed by the day to day realities of pastoral ministry that he or she may lose sight of other relevant and larger issues.

The international immersion experiences provided a context beyond my contextual places of identity. To share in ministry with our brothers and sisters of the African Diaspora impacted my life in ways that cannot be described. My ministry has been strengthened, stimulated and refined, my vision and perspective enlarged and in some cases, my personal biases critiqued and suspended. I was stretched, energized, and enriched by our exercises of engagement. To borrow the words of one of our colleagues (Group 2, Team 2), "we have increased appreciation for our brothers and sister of the African Diaspora-their strength, courage, intelligence and creativity inspires us to another level of excellence in our ministries. We know for sure that missions is not an auxiliary or an option, but a God-given mandate." Our vision was altered by our participation in a team-building exercise with ministry colleagues climbing the slippery rocks of Dunn River Falls, by the breathtaking beauty of Victoria Falls, by traveling to revivals in a canoe on the Pomeroon River in Guyana for a solid week at night without lights, by making pastoral visits by taxi in St. Ann's Parish in Jamaica, by walking the gang infested streets of Kingston, Jamaica, where dons rule by extortion, by witnessing the commitment of the townspeople to journey through a storm by foot to attend revival, by the prophetic commitment of Dr. Henry Mugabe at the Baptist Theological Seminary to teach liberation and train women and men for ministry, by the radical generosity and hospitality of people, and by participating

in a collaborative ministry assignments with international pastors who do so much with so little

**Deepening Impact:** The PEP program employs SMART (specific, measurable, attainable/achievable, realistic- and time-sensitive) goals that have resulted in measurable outcomes. The results have been transformation, maturation and improvement in the practice of ministry and leadership within the congregations that we serve and our community. We were inspired to return back to our local churches and start new ministries and invest in global missions. I was transformed professionally and personally. I learned to trust and empower others and to practice self-care without guilt. The didactics and workshops conducted on a myriad of clergy related topics including but not limited to clergy care, burnout, marriage, peer relationships, holy friendships, hospitality, ecclesiology, hospitality, church conflict, prophetic preaching, stewardship, and forgiveness were the equivalent of a post-graduate learning experience and enriched my professional life.

**Pastoral Stewardship:** In the biblical accounts of Matthew 21:1-11; Mark 11:1-10; Luke 19: 29-38; and John 12:12-15, there is a powerful stewardship principle contained in the story. Into this serene picture enter two strangers who began to untie the animals. The strangers have no right to take this man's animals – his livelihood. The man and his friends in the neighborhood respond with surprise and indignation. The gospel of Mark records that those who witnessed this asked, "What are you doing, untying the colt? The disciples say what Jesus had told them to say and nothing more. They simply responded, "The Lord needs it" (Luke 19: 34).

The importance of responsible stewardship was reinforced by my participation in the PEP program. The people of Guyana, Jamaica and South Africa need more than our preaching, prayers and time. They need our financial support. Giving has always been a mark of Christian commitment and discipleship. The ways in which a believer uses God's gifts of

material goods, personal abilities, and time should reflect a faithful response to God's self-giving in Jesus Christ and Christ's call to minister to and share with others in the world. My participation in PEP reminds me that we are called to care for all the Lord has given. Yet we are also called to be ready at any time to give them away to strangers if and when we believe the Lord has need of them. Our assets are to be in a constant state of readiness to be used in the kingdom of God. We must be prepared to part with our "stuff" not because of the way we are asked, the rewards promised, the advantages our giving will bring us or the guilt it will relieve. We must be prepared to give only because we believe "the Lord has need of it." We must be willing to share.

In closing, I have been convicted, energized and enriched by the privilege of engaging in ministry in an international context. I have been awed and overwhelmed by the radical generosity and hospitality of people with limited resources. I have been convicted by the economic disparity between churches in the international context and the ones that we serve in America; and embarrassed by our addiction and attachment to material comfort and our personal and corporate practices of stewardship. The opportunity to practice ministry in an international context opened my eyes to the reality that having a global perspective is not just to the end of the street, the extent of our zip code or our denominational interests. God calls us out of our church pews, beyond our comfort zones and preoccupation with ourselves to live under the influence of a Missionary Spirit who empowers us for effective and responsible witness in the world. The Living God is not a village God with a tribal ethic, existing for our concerns alone and isolated to our worlds. The Living God is a missionary God, a sending God whose love knows no ethnic, geographic, gender or geographic boundaries and limitations.

---

*The Rev. Gina M. Stewart is Pastor of Christ Missionary Baptist Church in Memphis, Tenn.*





reality I was referencing other pastors in America. Now my prayer for pastors is for pastors worldwide.

The greatest lessons I have gleaned from these immersions is one of self-care. I went on these 10 to 12 day trips wondering how my church fares without daily contact. To my surprise they did just fine and maybe felt more responsible for our church and our ministry! My ministry is practiced in a more relaxed context. I have to have time to refresh to be more

effective in ministry.

Even some Sabbaths away from my family is healthy in my opinion. I have learned to appreciate my family more as I have been. I've had great support from my wife and daughters as I prepared to travel. They were eager to hear about the experience as well. During these three years of mission my family members have obtained their passports. Our family lives more in an international context than before. It is easier to lead the congregation where I serve to engage in mission service because their pastor's life and commitment is stronger.

As a denominational leader in my State Convention and National Baptist Convention I believe my standard has been elevated. I will be a constant voice for what we are doing worldwide. My denominational participation has a renewed motive. My focus is on how the denominational partnership can assist me and the congregation in providing human and financial resources worldwide.

---

*The Rev. Samuel C. Tolbert Jr. is Pastor of Greater Saint Mary Missionary Baptist Church in Lake Charles, La.*

---





**STEPHENS:** Continued from Page 15

powerful team. Pastor Morris' strength seemed to be working with men in the community while Pastor Ricky enhanced the working of the church through singing and worship.

A wonderful encounter happened when I met a man by the name of Simon. He was a new convert who had back problems. It affected his legs which were unusually big. "I have self-confidence and I believe that if you and my priest, Pastor Morris, pray for me I will be healed," he told us in requesting prayer. We prayed for

Simon. The next day he reported that his legs were feeling better.

Living with Pastor Morris' family was a wonderful and humbling experience. Each time before I ate the oldest daughter Jade would bring water to me so that I could wash my hands. She would later bring me my food. She was truly a servant and this reminded me of the word of God that the greatest is the servant. My village taught me so much about hospitality and how to receive from another culture. Their kindness and love showed me the power of fellowship and communion with the people of South Africa.

In summary, my immersions journey gave me a global view of carrying out the Great Commission. I was strengthened inside by discussions of issues facing pastors and the church as a whole; all while engaged in sharing life with new people. I will pray for them and occasionally contact my fellow pastors and celebrate the fact that God brought us together to see His glory.

---

*The Rev. Mickael Stephens is Pastor of Christian Life Missionary Baptist Church in Goldsboro, N.C.*

---







Lott Carey Foreign Mission Convention  
220 Eye Street NE, Suite 220  
Washington, DC 20002-4362

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE

**PAID**

WASHINGTON, DC  
PERMIT No. 01345

*What in the world is going on in 2012?*



**The 115<sup>th</sup> Annual Session of the Lott Carey Convention**

**New Orleans, La. | 13-17 August 2012**

Visit [www.LottCarey.org](http://www.LottCarey.org) | Registration begins 13 January 2012