Leadership . . . the Lott Carey Way

Rev. Emmett L. Dunn leads new program for young ministers

Page 4

MISSIONARY MAN

Dr. David Emmanuel Goatley Marks 20th Year of Continuing Odyssey at Lott Carey

Page 8
FLINT UPDATE

CONTENTS

Lifting up Leadership 4
Dr. Goatley Hits 20 8
Missions Reports 20

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An old idiom holds that “time flies when you’re having fun.” If that’s the case, I’ve been having a blast.

It is hard to believe that I have been blessed to serve as Lott Carey’s executive officer for 20 years. We have faced global recessions, challenges that come with working in hard places around the world, resistance to generosity and collaboration in a culture that promotes stinginess and individuality and more. Nevertheless, serving in this capacity has been a joy.

Some folks warned me early on about how difficult it would be to step into leadership of a century-old organization and to succeed a venerable leader who served for 55 years. Their concerns never materialized. The occasional bumps in the road cannot compare to the wonderful journey we have shared and the marvelous opportunities God has provided for bearing witness to Jesus throughout the world. The people of Lott Carey have made the difference:

• The disciples of Jesus who have given money, offered prayers, volunteered time, worked on staff and served around the world are some of God’s best people. My predecessor, Wendell Clay Somerville, once preached a sermon about Paul and Barnabas in which he asserted that those missionaries were God’s best servants. The people of Lott Carey who send and serve for missions are also among God’s best. To all who have supported my leadership, prayed for my family’s well-being and my safe travels, and offered words of encouragement, I say thanks.

• The leaders and followers of the Lott Carey community across the years have continued to enrich my soul, improve my leadership and help me thrive; the elders who have sustained this work for so many years; my contemporaries whose support and insight broaden my vision, and the younger generations whose innovation inspires me to imagine beyond my own capacity to dream.

The Lott Carey Search Committee first contacted me in 1996 while I was teaching in Africa. The turnaround time was slow back then without computers and smartphones. None of us imagined back then where the two decades might lead. Likewise, it is impossible to know now what the years will bring. If the past is any indication of the future, time will continue to fly, because I expect to continue having a blast.

Preparing to fly!

David

“The occasional bumps in the road cannot compare to the wonderful journey we have shared . . .”

Read Goatley Profile, Page 8
DEVELOPING LEADERS
THE LOTT CAREY WAY

Rev. Emmett L. Dunn directs new program to enhance missions

Photo: Mike Tucker
Lott Carey Herald/Fall 2017
This leadership development program has an assertive motto: “Developing Leaders the Lott Carey Way.”

Leadership the Lott Carey Way emphasizes leadership with global vision and collaboration as opposed to a local- and national-centered vision and a hierarchical, top-down approach. A leader is anyone who has a responsibility to initiate assignments. What we refer to as the “Lott Carey Way” simply means being missional in our approach to leadership; everything must be done within the context of missions because that is the heartbeat of the Lott Carey community.

For many churches “missions” – domestically or internationally – means we see a problem and we try to fix it. The Lott Carey network sees missions as being in partnership with God and God’s people. Lott Carey does not use the 18th and 19th century model of doing missions that assumes we have all the answers for the problems of the world. No. Our people sit with the community we seek to serve because in missions partnership we give as well as we receive. Lott Carey is not in the business of perpetuating a dependency missions syndrome. We go in and identify those areas of ministry that we can walk alongside with our missions partners to encourage, enable and enrich people so that at some point they will be able to carry on their work independent of Lott Carey.

That sounds a lot different than being “imperialistic” – when missionaries tell indigenous people what they’re going to do rather than ask how they can be of service.

Precisely.

And it makes a difference?

It makes a big difference because the model that Lott Carey creates is one of listening and learning. Because the more you listen and learn, the better you can create partnerships. Notice, I’m saying “partner with.” Lott Carey is not telling our partners what to do or even how to do it. Lott Carey is saying, “We are here to walk alongside of you.” Because of our resources – financial and human – we can give guidance not for instruction but with the view of helping.

When I visited Liberia a few years back to report on the Lott Carey School, everyone greeted Dr. Goatley like he was part of the family rather than a benefactor.

Today’s leaders are well-educated, understand what true partnership is and know that Lott Carey has never taken advantage of the people it serves. That’s the difference.

How do (or did) missionaries take advantage of people?

For starters, deciding what they needed and
telling them what ministry ought to look like. I give early missionaries credit because they went into places that were dangerous for them and their families. So, I won’t speak disparagingly of them. However, a concern over the years has been Westerners who go to non-Western countries and try to transport Western cultures rather than biblical values. That was part of the problem – early missionaries could not differentiate what was western and what was Christian. Today, well-educated church leaders around the world say, “We can preach Christ. We can define Christ within our own context.” That’s what Lott Carey does – encourages people to do ministry within that context.

Given your body of work with missions in the U.S. and abroad, what sensibilities and tones do you want your young leaders to develop? What do you want from them?

We want them to see that there’s a place for them in Lott Carey. One of the propositions of this program is to let our younger pastors, ministers, church workers, and Christian educators see that there’s a place around the table at the highest levels. That’s the first thing you want them to see, there’s a place for you. We also want them to expand their view of ministry to a global perspective.

With so many awful things going on around the world, how can young ministers feel that they’re being transformative? What’s the mindset of a successful servant leader?

It requires a unique community because Lott Carey does not operate on personalities. No matter who the president of the organization is, Lott Carey’s call and purpose is to be missional. Our young people can see they’re not leading their own agenda but one crafted out of what we believe to be God’s call.

So, if you had to assign a couple of attributes to Lott Carey, what would they be?

Organic, people-oriented. Organic in the sense that we don’t have a one-size-fits-all missional approach. India, Nigeria, Liberia or Haiti, Guyana . . . wherever you go you see a different model being used, based on the circumstances of the population. People-oriented because Lott Carey does not subscribe to a book of policies to address problems around the world. We consider what the needs of the people are. If it’s educational, then that’s where we’re going to pour our energies. If it’s health, if it’s agriculture, that’s where we focus our partnership.

I find it interesting that Lott Carey, a Christian entity, does not try to subjugate other religions and local beliefs.

Lott Carey seeks to promote Christ wherever it goes. Our ministries around the world are not restricted to Christian or Baptist. Whatever Lott Carey does is for the larger community. When offerings are received – for educational, community development, whatever – the people know we are there doing it because of our love for Christ extended to them. We do not shy away from the fact that we are Christian and the result is to promote Jesus Christ.

You’ve been involved with Lott Carey for more than 25 years. How has it informed your leadership? What have you learned from Lott Carey that you wouldn’t have learned anywhere else?

We’re giving these young people a call to care for the lost, the last and the left out.”

My leadership has been informed partly on the current leadership of David Goatley, who invests in lives. Leadership is all about bringing people alongside and I’ve watched him do that without any fanfare, but intentionally. It is not by accident. If you just take a review of his ministry with Lott Carey, you’ll see this is not the first program that invests in his own people.

Lott Carey preaches Christ . . . and empowerment – teaching a child to read in Kenya, building new houses in Haiti, assisting hurricane victims in the American South. How do young ministers gauge success?

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people?
By exposing them to those same values and principles that have informed you, that got you where you are in your ministry. It’s also allowing people to be expressive and creative in their own way; helping them get to their destinations.

What makes you know in your gut that this program will work?
These are 12 dynamic, young people, most whom have already been recruited into the Lott Carey network primarily through the youth development program. Each has distinguished themselves in that program. They distinguished themselves academically – many have earned postgraduate degrees in areas of ministries from some significant schools around the world. Some have engaged in ministries that prove their initiative and most are lead pastors in significant churches in the U.S. Their commitment to ministry says to me that these are the young people who are capable and able to handle leadership.

“Lott Carey historically has never taken advantage of the people that we’ve been seeking to serve.”

I know people pray when times get tough. As a leader, what’s your process for navigating stormy waters?
I have the advantage of having a family. They’re my go-to. They’re my solace. I can just unpack, unload because they’re there for me – my wife and adult kids.

Even if it’s not a traditional family, would you encourage young ministers to find mentors or someone they can talk to?
Yes. Every pastor needs a pastor. Every leader needs a leader; someone you can confide in, someone with whom you can be yourself and vulnerable in their presence. Without that, I can’t see how anyone can survive because ministry has what I call “mountain-top experiences,” but they also have these “valley-of-shadow of death” experiences. God walks with us but that human touch is always needed in a ministry. I always encourage the younger ministers to find someone they can trust and who can look them in the eye and say, “You’ve messed up.”

As word of this program spreads in the U.S. and globally, why should folks get excited? Why should they care about developing young ministers?
Because the Church will have a future. Any church or community that has someone in this program should rejoice that they are being exposed to a different leadership dynamic. Something that is not taught in a seminary or a school.

Here are the 12 young ministers participating in Developing Leaders the Lott Carey Way:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trevor Beauford</th>
<th>Willie Francois</th>
<th>Amanda Haines</th>
<th>Robert James</th>
<th>Cory Jones</th>
<th>TaNikka Sheppard</th>
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<td>Union Baptist Church</td>
<td>Mount Zion Baptist Church</td>
<td>Shiloh Baptist Church</td>
<td>Zion Baptist Church</td>
<td>Tabernacle Baptist Church</td>
<td>New Salem Baptist Church</td>
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<td>Jaime Crumley</td>
<td>Vernon Gordon</td>
<td>Anthony Holmes</td>
<td>Xavier Johnson</td>
<td>Robin Monk Self</td>
<td>Ezra Tillman</td>
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<td>First Baptist Church</td>
<td>The Life Church</td>
<td>Loudoun Avenue Christian Church (Disciples)</td>
<td>Bethel Baptist Church</td>
<td>Bates Memorial Baptist Church</td>
<td>First Trinity Baptist Church</td>
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SON OF A PREACHER

DAVID EMMANUEL GOATLEY MARKS
20 YEARS OF LEADING LOTT CAREY
AND REDEFINING MISSIONS MINISTRY

Whether he’s passing out food in India, meeting with school officials in Liberia or comforting Katrina victims in Louisiana, the globe-trotting missionary loves his job. He says we must work locally and internationally to make a difference.

By Geri Coleman Tucker
It is a rare week when Dr. David Emmanuel Goatley is not traveling across the United States or around the world. He takes seriously and literally the Great Commission to spread the gospel to the ends of the earth. As executive secretary-treasurer of Lott Carey, his task is akin to that of a CEO, overseeing a multicultural organization committed to partnering with others who provide “financial support, and technical assistance to indigenous communities around the world who engage in ministries of evangelism, compassion, empowerment, and advocacy.”

He travels tens of thousands of miles a year in service to global missions. Yet even he sometimes does a double-take when he pauses to look at his schedule. “Airport Monday. Airport Tuesday. Airport Wednesday. Airport Thursday. Airport Friday. I’m starting to think that I’ve scheduled poorly,” he recently remarked on Facebook. “You are a sojourner about your Father’s business. Praise God for his sufficient grace,” responded Lott Carey supporter Romona Partlow.

Lott Carey is headquartered in Landover, Md., a suburb about 10 miles east of Washington, D.C. But given the mileage that Goatley racks up in a year, it was only fitting that he be miles from home in West Columbia, S.C., when he reached a significant milestone with Lott Carey on June 1.

“Feeling thankful at the end of the business day on my 20th anniversary with Lott Carey,” he wrote. “Time flies when you’re having fun.”

He had spent the week at Benedict College sharing with pastors and congregational leaders exploring new ways to extend the Christian witness locally and globally. While he was there, Lott Carey had missions teams operating in Australia, Canada, Haiti and Zimbabwe, and another team had recently returned from India.

Such is Lott Carey’s reach in the 21st century, a testament to the growth it has experienced during the 20 years that Goatley has helped shepherd the organization.

“He has really led the transformation of Lott Carey to become a missions organization that is relevant and growing with the times,” says Rev. Ngwedla Paul Msiza, president of the Baptist World Alliance, which has more than 42 million members in 121 countries. “His approach is one that affirms the local people and believes in the capabilities of the local people.”

There Is No “I” in Lott Carey

One thing you notice right away when Goatley speaks about Lott Carey: He talks about “we” and “our” not “me” and “I.” It is clear that Lott Carey is virtually synonymous with missions partnerships—and not a solo act.

When Goatley joined Lott Carey full time in 1997, he has helped shepherd the organization to become a missions organization that is relevant and growing with the times.
Since 1997, the number of Lott Carey partnerships has nearly quadrupled to about 26 countries. Not all those partnerships are continuous, Goatley says, but Lott Carey remains in communication with those partners. Lott Carey’s influence and assistance is found on nearly every continent, thanks in part to the vision of its leaders. Lott Carey emerged as one of the first missions groups to tackle the HIV/AIDS epidemic in South Africa, Msiza says, adding, “People with the virus were being expelled from their churches. Lott Carey came along side us at the time and started home-based ministries. But it was not just about evangelism.”

Lott Carey was there to address the needs of the people, he says, providing prevention education, testing, care and support. When devastating earthquakes leveled huge swaths of Haiti, killed hundreds of people and left thousands homeless, Lott Carey formed partnerships with groups already there building shelter, finding homes for children who were orphaned by the disaster, and providing food and education. Even today, Lott Carey continues the work in Haiti—sending a steady stream of short-term missions teams to the island nation to work in constructing homes with partners for the many people still without sufficient shelter.

When the Ebola virus proliferated through parts of West Africa, Lott Carey and its network of churches sent cleaning supplies, masks and food to Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea where more than 6,000 people died from the disease before it was contained. At the same time, it worked through its Lott Carey Mission School alumni in Liberia and other partners to help educate families about the best practices for handling the sick and staving off the spread of the
virus. Lott Carey has made the fight against human-trafficking a global priority and partnered with other like-minded ministries to care for, educate and support victims of abuse. And of continuing importance is one of the world’s largest missions fields: the United States itself. The continuing rise in homelessness, the growth of its immigrant population and several unprecedented natural and manmade disasters in recent years has required the resources of the Lott Carey network of churches.

In the aftermath of hurricanes that ravished parts of the South and East over the past several years, Lott Carey has created a Disaster Services Network to mobilize communities and churches when a crisis arises. For example, Lott Carey and its network crafted a multi-year response to aid those dislocated by Hurricane Katrina in 2005. The network is designed to provide food and water, social services assistance and child development programs and pastoral care when disasters strike. In Louisiana, it funded Resurrection Centers for months after Katrina hit, giving displaced families access to food, clothing and other supplies. Thanks to the generosity of Fountain Baptist Church in New Jersey, the church and Lott Carey acquired a 19-acre campsite in Louisiana—more than 100 miles from the Gulf—capable of sleeping up to 300 people in the event of future large-scale storms. The site, developed with partner support and volunteer labor, is used for a Christian camp during the summers.

Goatley says the success of the Disaster Services Network became the framework for Lott Carey’s national partnership with the National Baptist Convention of America and the American Red Cross. Their goal: to boost the number of churches that will serve as emergency shelters when there is a disaster and to increase the number of volunteers and blood donations from African Americans.

Building Leaders

Goatley is committed to harnessing the talent, skills and visions of the Lott Carey network to prepare the next-generation of leaders and ensure that the organization remains vibrant and relevant. That was evident at the 63rd Annual Lott Carey Youth Seminar at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore in June when more than 700 attendees came to serve, learn, worship and fellowship. “All organizations owe it to themselves to be intentional about nurturing the next generation of leaders,” Goatley says.

Rev. Amanda Haines knows firsthand how committed Goatley is to developing young leaders. He has been one of her mentors for the past 10 years.

“I always remember him saying to me, ‘Find God’s will for your life and stay in it.’” Since then, she says, “I’ve been enriched by every conversation we’ve ever had. His heart is big; his mind is phenomenal. But his...
Haines, church administrator and youth pastor of Shiloh Baptist Church in Norfolk, Va., is youth president for the Baptist World Alliance’s Youth Department and is part of the IYD Leadership Team. She is also part of a new one-year program called Developing Leaders the Lott Carey Way, funded by Leadership Education at Duke University’s School of Divinity.

Lott Carey also offers a leadership development program for more seasoned pastors. Some 150 pastors and 30 associate pastors have gone through its Pastoral Excellence Program—funded by a nine-year grant from the Lilly Endowment—that includes missions experiences abroad. A recent short-term immersion experience took a group of pastors on a pilgrimage of justice and peace to Palestine.

“We were hosted by the oppressed because we needed to hear the story of what it means to be the people of Jesus in the place that should be holy but where your water is cut off and walls are built up to control you,” Goatley says.

One outgrowth of a short-term immersion experience in India is a new doctoral program that Lott Carey is running in partnership with the Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology at Virginia Union University. By May 2018, the eight candidates in the program are expected to graduate with a doctor of ministry in Global Leadership.

In addition, Lott Carey has had more than 800 deployments of church members for short-term mission assignments since 2006, approximately 75 to 80 each year. Several have been to Haiti, where teams are building houses for the homeless. But there also have been trips to Italy, to work with churches serving many of the immigrants who are entering the country, and to Australia to work with churches that serve the indigenous aboriginal population.

Goatley believes very strongly in team work and partnerships, says Msiza, who has known him since the mid-1990s. Goatley has worked with several different Lott Carey presidents during his tenure as executive secretary-treasurer and together they have elevated the mission of Lott Carey over the years,
Msiza says.

“He’s a true partner in ministry,” even when some partnerships falter. “He does not give up on people even when things are not going well,” Msiza says. “Dr. Goatley is patient. He believes God can always resurrect situations.”

Goatley, a member of the Baptist World Alliance and its representative in the World Council of Churches Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace, was elected to that position because he believes in the sanctity of life. “Often, it is not easy for someone who confirms a certain faith to sit across the table and negotiate with leaders of different faiths,” Msiza notes. But that has proven to be one of Goatley’s great success stories, he says.

A Higher Calling

Twenty years at Lott Carey was a much different path than Goatley had planned to pursue. He and his brother Wilbert—a pastor in St. Louis—were born into a Christian home. Their father, W.H. Goatley, Sr., was a pastor; their mother, Lillian, was an educator and social worker with a deep commitment to serving others. And missions was an integral part of the life of their church. One of Goatley’s earliest recollections of that focus on missions is that a net-

Continued on Page 14
work of churches in his hometown of Louisville, Ky., worked together to support a missionary in Liberia. The churches assembled enough books of S&H green stamps and redeemed them to buy and send a Ford Pinto for the missionary to use in Liberia.

Goatley left a corporate career path to pursue ministry as a vocation. He served concurrently as director of the Baptist Fellowship Center in an underserved area of Louisville and superintendent of the Central District Baptist Association. He was called to the ministry and pastored the First Baptist Church of Campbellsville, Ky., for nine years. During that time, he completed his master’s degree and doctorate at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, where he and Waller, a fourth-generation pastor himself, first met. “We both had a similar commitment to seeing the church being missions-minded but progressive,” Waller says.

The two men took a missiology class together, Waller recalls, and they found themselves struggling with the then-prevailing approach to missions which was paternalistic and not focused on what communities said they needed. “The old European missional model was bankrupt. Our approach is to affirm the humanity of people,” he says.

In 1989, while still pastoring in Campbellsville, Goatley went on his first short-term missions assignment—21 days in Liberia and Malawi. That trip changed the arc of his life and confirmed for him the need for Christians to have a global consciousness. The night that Goatley and the rest of the team arrived in Liberia, they were stopped and surrounded by child soldiers with drawn weapons. It was six months before the outbreak of civil war in Liberia, and Goatley found the experience to be life-changing. In Malawi, the team was placed under house arrest for the first couple of days. Those were times of prayer and trusting that the Lord would work things out, he says. “But it was also transformative,” Goatley adds. “People living in abject poverty were serving the Lord with none of the apparatus that we are accustomed to. It was amazing to see the vibrancy and the vitality...
of their witness.”

His experiences years later doing research for a month in Argentina for his doctorate allowed him to see economic disparities in the world through a different lens than the way it is often framed in the United States. There it was not just black and white; it wasn’t African and European.

“It was, for me, a reframing of the complexity of oppression. That helped me to see more of the connectivity of oppression and how sin makes itself manifest in complex global and interconnected ways,” Goatley says. “If we are going to really work for justice and if we’re going to work to make this world more of what God wants it to be . . . it can’t just be your community or your country but we have to be involved in what’s going on in the world locally and globally.”

Goatley taught Pan-African and religious studies for a year at the University of Louisville while still pastoring in Campbellsville.

“My idea was to stay in the academy and try to move into a full-time academic role,” he says. He was called to Memphis Theological Seminary to teach pastors full time. During the summers, he taught ministry and theological development in Zimbabwe. That lasted just two years.

God had something else in mind for Goatley. When Somerville retired in 1995, Lott Carey began the search for new leadership. He was in Zimbabwe when the search committee reached out to him and offered him the job that capitalizes on all that he had done before: Working with networks of churches, connecting with and training pastors, and ministering to impoverished people. “He was educationally prepared and missionally committed,” Waller says.

Challenges Ahead

Lott Carey’s expanding global reach, however, is not without daunting challenges. One of the greatest is the ever-growing need for more resources and more
money. The 2008 recession hit Lott Carey particularly hard because most of its finances comes from the African American community in the United States, which was particularly devastated by the economic collapse.

African Americans absorbed the brunt of the millions of jobs lost and homes foreclosed on. When churches did give to Lott Carey, the amount was often lower than in previous years because many redirected giving and benevolent work nearer to home, Goatley says. But the need for resources worldwide is even greater now. “Disciples of Jesus live with unimaginable and indescribable pain and persecution in many parts of the world. They need to know that they are not alone,” he says.

So the work goes on. Lott Carey recently partnered with the predominantly white Baptist General Convention of Texas to build a water generation tower in Liberia, bringing easy access to clean water. Before that, people had to walk miles to get water for sanitation and hygiene. Some churches want to initiate projects on their own. Whenever that happens, “Lott Carey has found ways to help them do that,” Goatley says. “Our goal is to help churches expand their witness,” Waller adds.

Son of a Preacher

Continued from Page 15

Dr. Goatley with Rev. Robert James, Team Leader for Lott Carey’s International Youth Development Leadership.

Always seeking new ways to include youth in Lott Carey activities, Dr. Goatley meets with Kenyan university students in Nairobi.

Dr. Goatley with Pastor Nathan Scovens and other leaders in Winston-Salem, N.C.
But what of the next 20 years?

Goatley is confident that Lott Carey is on solid footing because it has been intentional about building a pipeline of gifted and talented young leaders. He points to the continuing success of the annual Youth Seminar as evidence because it is driven and run by young adults and is so dynamic and interactive that Lott Carey can’t accommodate all who want to attend.

He says churches and Lott Carey are in good hands because they are rich in creative and energetic young leaders. “Those young leaders have grown and matured, and they credit some of that to the experiences Lott Carey has given them. They are exercising very impactful and insightful leadership, and that’s one of my greatest joys,” says Goatley.

But he’s also confident about the future of Lott Carey and its leadership because of its legacy of overwhelming support from people who love the Lord and from key leaders across the board.

Says Goatley: “That says something about the character of the organization that I inherited. That soil was in place when I came, and that’s one reason why I’ve been able to flourish personally and the organization has been able to flourish.”

Lott Carey gave him the opportunity and freedom to lead. But he credits his “amazing” paid and volunteer staff as well. His strategy has been to find those talented people and allow them “to live into what God has given them as their giftedness.”

“Every good leader knows you are standing on a lot of shoulders,” Goatley says. “There are people helping you to exercise vision and strategy, and people who are exercising leadership on their own.”

Geri Coleman Tucker is a freelance writer living in the Washington, D.C., area.
It has been more than three years since a switch in the source of their drinking water created a nightmarish public health crisis for the residents of this city. In a flawed quest to save money, state and local officials decided to use water from the Flint River instead of continuing to use water piped in from Detroit.

What flowed into homes, however, was lead-tainted water that has cost lives, poisoned children and their families, triggered several lawsuits and major investigations, and led to criminal charges against more than 15 current and former state and city officials including the head of the state health department. An investigation found that lead was leaching into the water because aging pipes had not been treated with an anti-corrosive. And a report from the Michigan Civil Rights Commission found that “deeply embedded institutional, systemic and historic racism” played a role in the decision to change water sources.

The state is in the process of replacing all the lead and galvanized steel pipes that run from household plumbing to the city’s main pipelines that run under the streets. But only 2,181 of those lines had been replaced since last March and all the estimated 20,000 service lines won’t be replaced until 2020, the city has said. Meanwhile city workers are going door-to-door installing faucet filters in homes. City officials claim the filters work and that residents can safely use filtered water for cooking, bathing and drinking; but many residents remain skeptical and continue to use bottled water as they have since the crisis began.

Lott Carey Herald reached out to First Trinity Missionary Baptist Church, which has been in the vanguard of water and supply distribution, to get some needed perspective and an update:

Even as city officials say filtered water is safe to drink, First Trinity continues safety warnings and distributing bottled water.
Deacon Bill R. Quarles, coordinator of the church’s water crisis operation, says troubled community needs more help: ‘We’re still hurting here’

City officials say it’s safe to use filtered water for cooking, bathing and drinking. Not to the extent that we can now stop distributing the water. We’re still doing that daily.

How are folks coping?
The people are frustrated. We are going into four years now. It’s become our way of life. Some residents have left town . . . they just moved to other parts of Michigan.

How are you making sure people know that they should not drink the water?
Social media. Flyers when we go out to the community. And Pastor Tillman, who as he travels, informs the country that we’re still having problems. We’re still hurting here.

What are your current needs?
Gallon jugs of water for cooking and bathing; baby wipes and small, eight-ounce bottles of water for schools. The kids were wasting the 16-ounce bottles.

Anything else?
It’s been amazing to see the support that we’ve had. We’ve bonded with some wonderful people across the country. I’ve been doing this now going on three years. My day starts at 6:00 in the morning and ends at 9 or 10 at night. I love every minute that I’m helping someone.

So, to quote the song, you don’t “feel no ways tired”?
No, sir. I feel like going on.

For the Tillmans, joy and pain amid the water crisis: ‘God is with us’

A swirl of church duties and keeping the embattled community encouraged and faithful is enough to fill any plate. But for Pastor Ezra L. Tillman Jr. and First Lady Catrina Tillman, Flint’s water crisis was just background to the rollercoaster ride called life. First, the Tillmans became legal guardians to niece Ashleigh, 14, and nephew Marcus, 17, when Catrina’s sister died; then they welcomed a new baby, Luke, into the world on June 23, to join Ezra III, 8, Micah, 7, and Isaac, 5. Despite their hectic home and church schedules, they took a moment to share their thoughts:

On the water crisis
Pastor Tillman: “It’s still going and people are still suffering. The water’s still not safe. There are warnings about the damage it may cause to the skin.”

On staying optimistic
Pastor Tillman: The victory did not come at a fast pace for forerunners such as Dr. Martin Luther King. We must continue to be vocal with our message so that people know what’s happening. This water crisis will be a long-standing issue and remain on the map for years to come.

Mrs. Tillman: People still trust that the church is a pillar in the community. We have complete strangers and other churches visit First Trinity because they see our effort and vision. And they are willing to sacrifice their time and finances to aid us during the water crisis. They keep me hopeful. They let me know that God is with us and that even in a crisis you can still see Christ.

On the church’s proposed health clinic
Mrs. Tillman: The Revive Community Health Center could be the one-stop shop for children services, speech therapy and regular checkups. It is a vision that is very much needed.

To donate, write checks and money orders payable to: Revive Community Health Center and mail to First Trinity Missionary Baptist Church, 1226 Beach St., Flint, MI 48502.
Our first missions team went to Australia in 2016 to work alongside indigenous Christians and local organizations to address women’s empowerment and human trafficking concerns. One year later, we returned with a group of seven to take part in national events commemorating the atrocities inflicted upon Aboriginal Australians and Torres Strait Islanders by the Australian federal and state government and church missionaries – actions which can only be described as cultural genocide.

Ironically, one day after our arrival, on National Sorry Day, we sat with Stolen Generation Survivors in a cemetery, as they dedicated a memorial in honor of the Aboriginals buried there. National Sorry Day is an annual event that observes the traumatic events perpetrated against First Nation people. The Stolen Generation represents the Indigenous children (primarily biracial children called half-castes) who were forcibly removed from their families from 1910-1970 as part of the Australian government’s forced Assimilation policy.

While looking out among the tombstones, Ezekiel 3:15 came to mind: “I sat where they sat, and..."
remained there among them astonished for seven days.” The injustice perpetrated against a whole nation of people seems incomprehensible, unhuman.

After the ceremony, our team spent time with the elders and survivors of the Stolen Generation. Some survivors shared stories of their capture, while others pointed to photos of various family members who were stolen on a memorial wall.

A survivor of the defunct Bomaderry Aboriginal Children’s Home said he didn’t grieve the loss of his parents like other children because he was taken at nine months old and had no memory of them. But all these years later, he said he can still remember the sounds of the children weeping for their parents during the night. He and other survivors wanted us to share their stories with Christians in America so that they would know their trauma and that they are still suffering with exceptionally high incidence of suicide.

Dr. Mallery Callahan, President of the Louisiana Home & Foreign Missions Baptist State Convention, shared: “I lived through the 60s Jim Crow era. I went to segregated schools, segregated health clinics and entered through the back door many times, but the plight of the Aboriginal people . . . I cannot even imagine having your land, language and culture taken from you and to be told you must now be white,” Dr. Mallery Callahan said. “After meeting Pastor Ray Minniecon and Pastor Tony Riches, my eyes were further opened as a pastor to the struggle of Aboriginal pastors trying to serve so many hurting people with so few resources or churches of their own.”

This mission revealed a dark history that still reverberates on the 50th anniversary of the referendum when First Nation people won the right to be counted in the national census as fully human in their own land. Our experience can best be summarized by Eartha Cross, President of the Wives & Widow Auxiliary, National Baptist Convention of America International: “My eyes were opened. I couldn’t believe there were no churches or schools for Aboriginal people or that they struggle even today just to be recognized and valued as the original inhabitants in their own country. I now see them as brothers and sisters in Christ, though separated by thousands of miles. Their needs are our needs. Their struggles are our struggles.”

We will continue our work alongside our weary yet unbroken First Nation partners. The putrefied wounds of black and brown lives have been left unattended for far too long.

Rev. Dawn Sanders is Director of Missional Programs for Lott Carey.
It’s been nearly eight years since a deadly earthquake hit Haiti. Many of the organizations promising to rebuild Haiti are no longer present in the county; but Lott Carey has remained. Immediately following the earthquake, we provided financial, material and human resources to rebuild, to provide basic shelter and respond to the needs of those who suffered during the disaster.

Today, Lott Carey’s focus in Haiti is rebuilding one community at a time. Over the past two years, we have partnered with Mission of Grace Haiti to rebuild the community of Carries, which suffered from the August 2015 mudslide. We were introduced to the mission by Rev. Dr. DeForest B. Soaries, Jr., Senior Pastor, First Baptist Church of Lincoln Gardens in Somerset, N.J., who shared a video of Mission of Grace founder Linotte “Lynn” Joseph talking about Lott Carey:

“Lott Carey doesn’t come empty-handed,” Joseph said. That sound bite is an excellent description of the short-term missions (STMs) teams, which donate clothing, shoes, medicines, and baby formula and diapers. In addition to monetary donations from many churches and individuals, some material donations of note:
• Hundreds of new shoes and sandals from Rev. Alvin Noel and the True Light Missionary Baptist Church in Lake Charles, La.
• Eight large barrels filled with shoes, hats, diapers and medicines shipped from Alfred Street Baptist Church in Alexandria, Va.
• New clothes, medicine and other items from The First Baptist Church of Norfolk, Va.

Some missionaries come to Haiti with suitcases full of new clothes and leave with only a backpack because they washed what they wore during the week and gave their clothes to someone in need. Teams are also generous in their monetary giving. A portion of each person’s trip cost goes toward building or repairing homes, the orphanage, the school or other community development projects.

Helping to rebuild homes and lives in Haiti is part of Lott Carey’s ministry.

Haiti Short-Term Missions is a great way to:
• Share the Gospel by teaching Bible study or Vacation Bible School.
• Provide a vital service, such as teaching English or music at a school or using your medical skills in a clinic, orphanage or senior home.
• Interact with youth at a vocational center by sharing your electrical and plumbing skills, or homemaking skills in knitting and sewing.
• Rebuild a community through construction and repair projects.

The missions experience costs $2,000 and includes transportation, lodging, meals, travel insurance and program costs. Consider joining one of these upcoming STMs to Haiti:

• 21 – 28 October 2017 – COED Team
• 11 – 18 November 2017 – NBCA Men on Mission
• 25 November – 2 December 2017 – COED Team
• 24 February – 3 March 2018 – COED
• 31 March – 7 April 2018 – COED
• 7 – 14 July 2018 – COED
• 10 – 17 November 2018 – NBCA Men on Mission
• 24 November – 1 December 2018 – COED Team
Commentary and Photos by Ellyn Jo Waller, Ed.D.

The recent pilgrimage for justice and peace to the Holy Land was powerful. Our Lott Carey team of 16 was transformed as we journeyed between what we were told to believe and what we saw with our own eyes: checkpoints, permits, separation walls, controlled water usage, military occupation, humiliation, illegal settlements, assault weapons, armed settlers. It was all eerily reminiscent of atrocities of the past, and it was disheartening to learn of and witness the atrocities committed in the Holy Land.

“Complex is the word that comes to mind as I struggle to process my experiences in Palestine. Although it has been months since our trip, I am still grappling with the things that I saw, felt, and experienced during my pilgrimage there,” said Rev. Xavier L. Johnson, a team member and Lott Carey pastor of Bethel Missionary Baptist Church in Dayton, Ohio. The plight of the Palestinian people is the byproduct of a historical, political, social, and religious narrative not unlike the narratives that produced Jim Crow in America, Nazism in Germany, and apartheid in South Africa. It is this fact that demands that the black church lends its prophetic voice to the cause of the Palestinian people.”

We visited WI’AM Center for restorative justice and Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, the World Council of Churches headquarters in Jerusalem, Al-Aqsa Mosque, the Dome of the Rock, St. Anne’s Church, Pool of Bethesda, Mount of Olives, Pater Noster (where Jesus taught His disciples to pray), the Wailing Wall, the Via Dolorosa, Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the Tomb of Joseph, the Upper Room, a wilderness Bedouin Community, the Jordan River, Hebron (burial place of Abraham and Sarah), Ramla (where Jews, Christians and Muslims currently live harmoniously), Nazareth (Church of the Annunciation, Evangelical Biblical College), Galilee, Tiberias, Magdala (town of Mary Magdalene) and Capernaum.

Our perspectives were challenged by
our experiences and the godly people who deepened our understanding with the beauty of their words. We traveled by van with our Palestinian guides, visited sacred sites of Christianity, Judaism and Islam, a grassroots organization focused on restorative justice, a refugee camp and a Bedouin community. As we rode throughout the land, we read and reflected upon scriptures related to our location.

Observing the disunion of this region was at times painful and caused many of us to reexamine our theological views of “chosen-ness.”

Lott Carey President Alyn E. Waller said, “The foundation of my faith has been shaken but my hope is still alive. I believed Israel to be God’s chosen People and their return to Palestine as necessary for the Second Coming of Christ. However, I cannot reconcile the actions of the people occupying the land with their place in prophetic destiny. It is inconsistent to think that the liberating God of the Bible would condone the oppressive actions of Israel today.”

Our pilgrimage resulted in gratefulness and inquiry. We are grateful for the experiences of walking where our Savior walked, praying where He prayed and feeling His powerful presence in the gentle breezes. Yet, we are compelled to ask: How can justice and peace be achieved in this war-torn region? What responsibility do we, American Christians, have in facilitating justice? How can our understanding of liberation theology aid in the process?

Our Palestinian sisters and brothers could have asked for many things during our time together, however their simple request was that we would fervently pray for them and retell what we experienced when given the opportunity. Lott Carey, we must work to empower the weak and bring the powerful to their senses, not their knees.

Ellyn Jo Waller, Ed.D., is First Lady of Enon Tabernacle Baptist Church in Philadelphia, Penn.
We went there to minister, but we were the ones in need of ministry. We landed in Johannesburg, South Africa, after a long and exhausting flight, made our way to our hotel and slept in preparation for our first day of ministry. Little did we know how much we would be changed by encountering our brothers and sisters in South Africa. One of our first tasks was to help deliver meals for those living with HIV/AIDS. We felt great about this ministry activity. We visited a shelter for men who battle drug addiction and we worshipped with them and told our stories as we listened to theirs. My team felt empowered as we ministered to those hurting spiritually through counseling. But it wasn’t until we made our way to Cape Town that we realized that we were the ones that needed the Good News. Yes, we saw the extreme poverty of the townships surrounding both Johannesburg and Cape Town. We immersed ourselves in what we determined was their pain. We walked unpaved streets of drug-infested squatter towns. We visited a school for children who had lost their parents. In each of these instances we positioned ourselves as the benevolent Americans, but when we met the young ladies from Teen Challenge we quickly realized that we were truly sent to be blessed by their awesome resilience and testimony. The testimony of Teen Challenge participants taught us about the tremendous power of God to heal and deliver. Their struggle with addictions, gang violence and sex trafficking does not overshadow the power of God to liberate. We were humbled by their smiles, testimonies and their powerful faith in God. It caused us to reevaluate the strength of our relationship with God.

Dr. Dante D. Wright I is senior pastor of Sweet Home Baptist Church – The Pinnacle of Praise – in Round Rock, Texas.
Kai Wright was 15 years old when she took her first missions trip to Cape Town, South Africa, with her father, Dr. Dante D. Wright, senior pastor of Sweet Home Baptist Church in Round Rock, Texas. Kai, now 16, will be a sophomore at Stony Point High School and aspires to be a marriage and family counselor. She spoke with Lott Carey Herald managing editor Mike Tucker about a journey that she says opened her eyes and her heart to people who struggle for things she and other teens in the U.S. take for granted. Excerpts from the interview:

I was told this trip was transformative for you. Just going there, handing out clothes, giving out food. I was talking to people my own age. I wasn’t shocked but I was surprised because I don’t go through that type of stuff, and it was upsetting.

What affected you, made you upset? The group that we talked to . . . most of them were suffering with AIDS and HIV, as well as home issues. Some didn’t have parents at all. They’re taking care of their brothers and sisters by themselves as the oldest child. Some of them have parents that just straight up neglected them.

Did that make you think about your life in the United States? It just gave me a whole different mindset; to be grateful for what I had and know that there are people out there who don’t have everything that I have; I feel that sometimes I take advantage of that.

A little guilt maybe – “My parents don’t ask me to do that much after all?” Yes. (Laughter.)

Despite your advantages, what do those kids in South Africa have that you need more of? They’re very strong, emotionally, and they’re very hopeful – especially with what they’re going through. One girl poured her heart out, telling us how she was going to make it through. She’s just trying to excel in school so she can go to college.

Did their stories make you cry? (Laughter.) Yes.

What were you crying about? I just instantly burst out crying because, you know, I am the same age as some of these kids and hearing what they had to go through on a daily basis. Also, hearing what some women have to go through . . . some brutal stuff – poverty, drugs, gang violence. And I’m thinking, “Wow! We’re all surviving by the grace of God.”

How has the trip changed you? It made me more open and more grateful. I appreciate what I have so much more. I’m just thankful, honestly.

What would you tell other teens who are thinking about missions but are not sure it’s for them? I would tell them it’s an experience, a life-changing experience. You get to help others, they help you; you find out more about each other. It’s wonderful.
Kids Against Hunger – Lott Carey, Inc. (KAHLC) is a new meal distribution ministry providing hydrated meals for children and families experiencing hunger in the United States and aboard.

Daily, 21,000 people around the world die from hunger-related causes. It is our hope to unite with compassionate partners who will join us in alleviating hunger and advocating for the poor. This hands-on event is a great way for church members or local volunteers (age six and older) to give back to their community by assembling meal packets for those in need. We welcome an opportunity to partner with those who believe hunger is unjust and will join us in this new ministry of compassion. Together we can make a difference!

Host a Meal Packing Event in Five Easy Steps:
1. Determine your budget – Domestic meals are 25 cents per packet (minimum 10,000 meals per event). International meals (meal costs plus shipping).
2. To learn more and complete an Event Request visit, www.kahlottcarey.org
3. Receive an Event Confirmation
4. Submit Payment
5. Mobilize your Volunteers and Host your Event.

For more information contact:
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