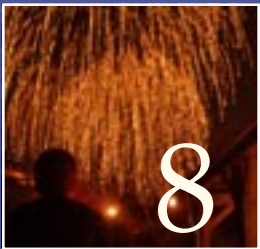


THE GLOBE

Spring 2005

News for the Passport World



Antiphony

Passport, CBF and the Samuel Project host a student conference on calling



wonderful song sung at Antiphony.

We were standing behind the registration desk when he walked up. He came to say thanks, to say he was glad he came. But it was what he said afterward that got our attention. "I just wanted to tell you I'm through," he announced. We stared at him with uncertain, quizzical grins. "Through?" someone asked. "Yep, I'm through. There's still one more worship

This first-ever college conference, sponsored by Passport, CBF and the Samuel Project, got its name from a musical concept. An antiphony is a musical presentation where two pieces of music are played in a back and forth dialogue. During the course of the conference, inspirational voices led participants antiphonally, through preaching, worship, drama, small groups and chat rooms. An atmosphere of



service to go, but God has been speaking to me so much, I'm not sure I can hold anymore. I knew God wanted me here, but I never knew God had so much to tell me."

conversation was created, posing questions about God's call that were too complex for simple answers.



Ken Medema

Colleen Burroughs and Julie Pennington-Russell preached sermons focusing on the conference theme: God's call, the world's cry, my answer. Preaching at times together,

He was not alone - 250 college students, college ministers, volunteers and worship leaders could echo his proclamation. We were all grateful we had come, thankful to have been a part of the

antiphonally, they looked at the many aspects of calling as Burroughs

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Water,

as my fact-wielding, seven-year old daughter likes to point out, covers two-thirds of the earth's surface and provides nearly that same proportion of a human's body mass. These two facts, no doubt, correlate to the amount of water displaced from the tub when many children take baths.

To most children in the United States, water can be a source of pleasure when swimming, puddle-splashing or fishing, a source of disappointment with rained-out ball games, bedtime signaling baths, or simply taken for granted - turn the tap and swallow. Seldom are we faced with the frightening nature of our planet's liquid composition. When a tragedy like the tsunami or an accidental drowning invades a child's world, theological questions are bound to rise. As we at Passport prepare for a joy-filled summer of *"Making a Splash,"* we have been forcibly reminded of the need to address the shadow side of life. Perhaps, as you wrestle with your own children's questions about the devastation around the Indian Ocean rim, some of the probing we have done will prove helpful to you.

Life does not stay still—it moves and changes. In the blooming of a flower and the new inch in a child's height, this truth is self-evident. As a "living" part of God's creation, the earth itself constantly changes, and it is because of nature's adaptability that we humans can exist. Changes do have consequences—sometimes ones that lead to sorrow. One way of interpreting a tragedy like the tsunami is to regard it as a divine punishment for bad choices and behavior. Not only do cultures around the world see the world in this way, so do some Christians in our own country.

Jesus taught his followers, however, not to jump to conclusions about God when they are in the presence of suffering. He made a clear distinction between physical ailment and sin (Luke 5:17-26; 13:1-5, John 9:1-3). Although Jesus never gives an easy answer about why people suffer, he is adamant that God does not cause suffering as a way to punish.

Jesus also taught us to identify with those who suffer, to reach out to them in compassion (Matthew 25:31-46; Luke 6:20-26). In other words, because we know what it is like to suffer, even a little, we must think of people who are hurting as if we are hurting along with them. Just as we want relief from our own suffering, we want to relieve the suffering of others as well. This is the reason many of us gave to tsunami relief funds, the reason many mission field personnel left their safe places to help the victims. It is the Christ-like response to tragedy.

"Making a Splash" is a phrase that can mean "making a difference." Some people in the world see Christians in the United States as selfish and greedy, thinking that we see our way as the only good way. We want children to make a different kind of splash—to value other people and cultures, to share our plenty with those who have little, to care when people are hurting and to love with the amazing and unselfish love of Jesus. As you and the children in your family of faith grapple with storms that sweep over people's lives, we hope you will strive to offer good, life-giving water.

Mark McClintock





cover story cont'd

raised the possibility that God's call and the world's cry might be the very same sound.

Ken Medema led worship, and in his amazing way, tapped into the soul of the event by creating songs that echoed sermons. Students were asked by Ken to dance, to live deeply, to feel and to understand the needs of the world. Nathan Hanson echoed Ken's songs with his saxophone, creating a musical *antiphony* as the two sounds blended into a beautiful repose.

In between the sermons and the songs, students participated in drama, contemplative prayer experiences and live webcasts with people living their call around the world. As a part of worship, students worked with artist, Laura Hanson on an evolving painting that grew more colorful each day, seeming to symbolize the evolving nature of God's call.

But worship was not the only place God's call was recognized. Students were encouraged to create a space for play in their lives through a bowl game party, movie night, concert by Ken Medema and New Year's Eve bash. During the afternoons, students spent their time in D-groups and had a chance, through thirty-two different chat rooms, to interact with people doing ministry.

By the end of the conference, there was one question left unanswered. "When will the next *Antiphony* be held?" Students are still hoping for an *antiphonal* response, a response that answers them saying, "very soon."

- Melissa Browning



Positive Feedback

Nick Foster

Face a deep, rocky canyon and shout out one word, "Hello!" like so many who have come before. The reply you hear is one you expected, the same word, "Hello" repeated again and again, fading away with each repetition.

At Passport, we have a different expectation of *Echo*, an event this summer for youth who are thinking that God might be calling them to vocational ministry. In partnership with Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond (BTSR), Passport will offer for the first time,

a place where youth can explore God's call.



It all began in the summer of 2002 in a conversation David Burroughs had with Paul Baxley at camp. Paul, then the campus minister at Wingate, was writing the BTSR grant request to the Lilly Endowment, in hopes of receiving a "vocational grant." Paul wanted to know if Passport would partner with the seminary on the project.

This summer at Echo, the result of that partnership, *The Samuel Project*, will come to fruition. Passport is designing Echo, bringing years of youth camping experience to bear on this new, exciting opportunity. BTSR professors will bring a wealth of teaching expertise, informing and challenging Echo youth to think hard and reflect quietly.

Youth will find a community of others with similar experiences. Together they will explore what the calling of God means and how they might respond to that call. We expect we will hear that call echoed in the lives of these young people, not fading, but growing in volume and effectiveness with each passing year.

Echo will happen July 12-16 at Wingate University. Space is available on a first come, first served basis. Registration will close when the session is full or on March 31, 2005. Visit www.thesamuelproject.org/echo to download an application.

Journey

Melissa Browning

Sitting on a sandy beach, the reflection of the sun on the water can make the world feel right. Yet that same calming water can cause us to flee to safer ground when the waves become fierce. The power of water is fraught with paradox. Within its grasp we can find nourishment, healing and even devastation.

The fragility of our own lives is much like the water we drink each day. Forces underneath, often beyond our control, can swirl through our lives, causing us to drift in the currents. So often, we cast off as confident captains, but come back to shore drenched, dragging our lifeboats behind us.

Life is uncertain, with no promises to be safe. During Lent, we remember a Savior who meets us in the midst of our uncertain lives, pledging to walk the road with us, a road he has walked before.

Journey to the Cross, Passport's online Lenten devotional, strives to be a safe place along the road, a place where people can connect with their creator by calm streams or in dangerous waves. With an Ash Wednesday launch, this year's site begins the month of March with over 51,000 visitors from 87 countries. Thousands continue to visit each day as they read devotions by amazing authors and listen to music created by Ken Medema for this year's site. Journey's theme for 2005 is water, a theme created in an attempt to give people a chance to respond to the devastation of the recent tsunami floods. These devotions have had an amazing impact on readers who have written in with appreciation for this contemplative place they have found online.

Yet Journey to the Cross and Following the Star (Passport's online Advent devotional) are living in fragility as we look toward the future. Because both

sites are commercial-free and generate no income, financially they are hard to sustain. Yet with good work comes strong hope. Just last week, a Naval captain from Spain, who we've never met, sent a \$1000 donation to Journey.

Our faith asks us to reach the world with God's message. Through Journey to the Cross and Following the Star, Passport is thankful to play a small part. We would love for you to join us in this ministry. If you or your congregation has been blessed by Journey to the Cross or Following the Star, will you consider partnering with us to keep this ministry going? Please prayerfully consider the role you could play as we seek to share together the good news of Christ's love and sacrifice with our world.

In our journey here at Passport, we're finding that the uncertain places in our lives and ministry are the places where God meets us with wonderful, unexpected answers. In these places, we're thankful for a good God who walks with us on the road, and for good partners who join us in the journey.

Seeing ourselves clearly,
without our excuses,
without our best questions
and answers,
is necessary for a move
toward wholeness.
How fortunate for us that the
one who brings the mirror is
the son of God,
the giver of living water, mercy
and forgiveness dripping from
his hands,
water turned to cleansing wine
dripping into our mouths,
washing away the shame.

Judy Skeen
Reflection on John 4:16-26



The Sitting Place

As part of my Lenten experience, I am building a path to the sitting place. I am always looking for an alternative Lenten

experience, as a non-traditionalist, and get tired of giving up sweets, chocolate or caffeine.

We live on the top of a mountain, overlooking the Cahaba River in Alabama. I grew up jumping off a rope swing into its cool waters on hot summer days. Now I pass it on the way to work and wish I had time to stop and cool my feet. Our property runs down the mountain to the road across from the river. About half way down this steep slope is a large table rock with another big boulder right in the middle – the sitting place.

It is a steep climb down and can be a bit treacherous. So this Lenten season, I am marking this path, carving it out, laying stones for steps with a goal to spend some time at my sitting place every day that it doesn't rain.

Today, my work starts with a rake, a shovel, pruning sheers and a pair of lady's work gloves – the only ones to be found. Leaving the safe backyard, I begin to mark the path by racking the leaves down to the dirt beneath. During this process I discover that *I am not finding the path – the path is finding me*. The rake is being drawn down the path with little effort. It is a natural process, following the topography from tree to tree in a slow zigzag that takes me quickly to the sitting place.

I notice that the path crosses and borrows two deer trails – I feel connected to primeval patterns.

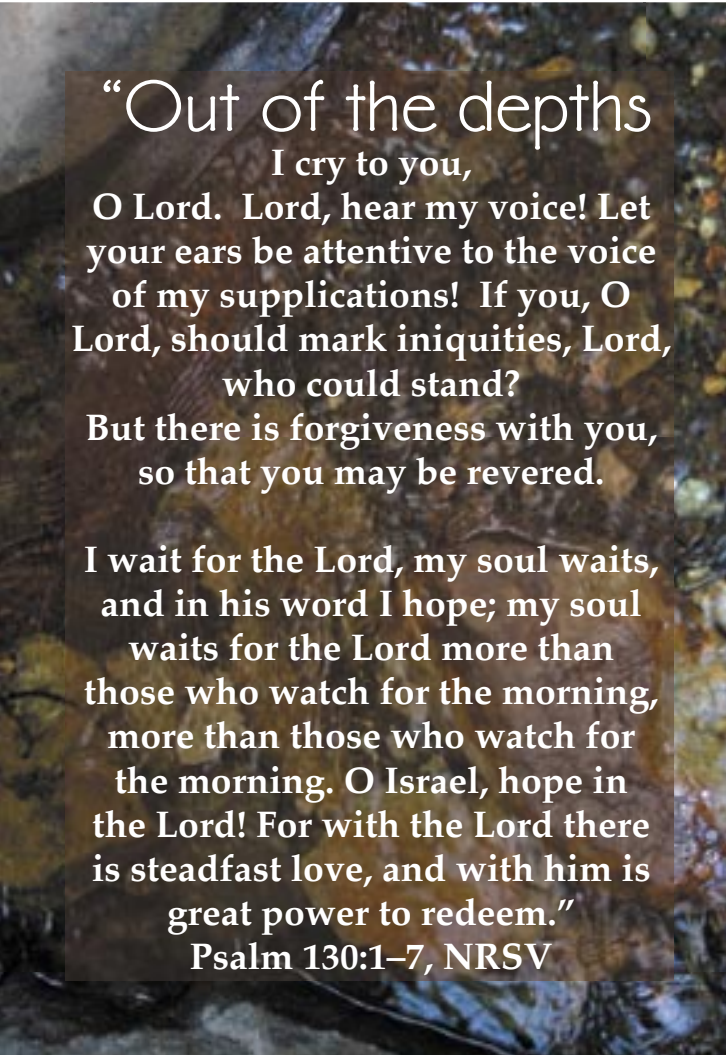
The slope is covered with small, 15-foot trees that have died and fallen over. I decide to mark the boundary of the path with these logs. The process of pulling the trees over to the path causes most of the branches to break off. One tree pulled randomly from a group has a curve on the end, which fits

exactly the turn of the path where I am standing. This feels good. I am concentrating on the work, my breathing and my steps – nothing else. This is rare for me – a multi-tasker – but I like it. Perhaps with age comes the ability for greater focus.

When the day's work is done, I go and sit at the sitting place. It is an amazing view of the river, the forest and the sky – water, earth and air. I feel connected to God in ways not felt for a long time. I wait expectantly. I have been waiting for a long time, felt alienated from God

for a long time. But over the last few weeks, the pieces have started coming together – or coming back together. This season, I am stepping into the Kingdom of God, putting my hope in the LORD who has "great power to redeem." Redemption, recreation and rest – this path is finding me. Thanks be to God.

David Burroughs



Meet the 2005 Directors



Susan



Walt



Anna Kate



Renee

Susan Reed - Second year as Passportkids! Director

Age: 26
Hometown: Versailles, Kentucky
Education: Georgetown College, BA
Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond, 2nd year of M.Div.
Experience: Bible Study Leader '02, Director of West Team '03
Director of first PASSPORTkids! Team, 2004

What are you most looking forward to this summer? "I am most looking forward to the energy and excitement of camp and seeing how the campers, chaperones, and staff are impacted by a week together full of fun, love and focus on God."

If you had to be an animal, what would you choose to be? "If I could be an animal, I'd want to be a dog - the kind you'd have for a pet. They make good friends, know how to spend a day relaxing, and their only care in the world seems to be about whomever they are with. I think I'd like to aspire to that."

Walt Windley - Jetseton Director

Age: 22
Hometown: Gastonia, NC
Education: Furman University
Experience: Bible Study Leader 2003, Mission Project Coordinator 2004

What are you are most looking forward to this summer? "I love the ecumenical, corporate worship that I get to be a part of at PASSPORT. Whether it be in the nightly service or the joint offering of God's love while at mission sites, coming together with a common purpose to worship a Holy God is amazing."

If you were an animal, what would you be? "I have to go with an otter. They tend to work a lot, take care of their families, and mate for life - the only animal to truly show this characteristic. I admit, one day I hope to marry and have those 2.4 kids on suburbia lane with 3 dogs and a hamster named Ralph."

Anna Kate Ellerman: Wingate Director

Age: 29
Hometown: Radford, Virginia
Education: College of William and Mary, Duke Divinity School (M.Div.)
Duke Divinity School (currently working on a Th.M. degree)
Experience: Bible Study Leader 1998, Assistant Director 1999,
Camp Pastor 2002

What are you are most looking forward to this summer? "Working with a talented and fun group of staffers, youth leaders and youth."

If you were an animal, what would you be? "A big, fat Persian cat in a posh living situation."

Renee Kenley: Kentucky/Canada Director

Age: 25
Hometown: Georgetown, KY
Education: Georgetown College
Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond, 2nd year of M.Div.
Experience: Bible Study Leader 2000, 2001, Assistant Director 2002,
Wingate Director 2003

If you were an animal, what would you be? "A Giraffe"

The Instantaneous Youth Minister

Allan Burton

“I want that and I want it right now!” is a phrase a parent often hears from a child. We expect our children to grow out of such expressions; but do they ever? How many youth ministers have heard similar expressions of instantaneous desire? Or better yet, how many have felt or *expressed* a similar longing?

I remember just five years ago holding off setting up my first email account like a running back stiff-arming a linebacker. Only a few years earlier, I was making fun of those initial cell phone users. Now, as I wait on an email response to a message I just sent, or wait for the automated voice on my friend’s cell phone voicemail to stop talking so I can leave a message (“...*after leaving a message you can simply hang up*” – Come on, I don’t have time for this! – “...*or press pound for more options*” – Doesn’t that drive you crazy!) I find myself more impatient than I ever thought I could be. I want instantaneous gratification. And if *I* want it, imagine what the youth around me are experiencing!

What did we ever do before instant messaging, email and the internet? What did we do before we could turn on our computer and instantly find an answer to any question we could consider, or “google” a person and discover numerous facts about them stored in cyberspace, or observe satellite photos of a flooded land just moments after it tragically happened halfway around the world? What did we do before cell

phones and faxes? Before copiers and scanners? Before overnight delivery? And yet I cannot imagine my world without these instantaneous conveniences. What has this world come to?

You might be wondering where I am going with this... If I were you, I would be predicting a diatribe on slowing down and deliberately stepping back towards a simpler time and life where people could actually go somewhere and be unreachable. I would expect a lesson on the intentionality of letter writing and the usefulness of actually turning off your cell phone so you can rest and rejuvenate. However, you would be wrong in this assumption.



In a time when technological discovery is at its height, I yell at the top of my lungs, “**Embrace the Forum! Seize the Blog!**” The youth to whom you are ministering are more accessible than ever before, and so are the resources that motivate them. So stop putting off designing your church website; instead, use it to create a safe place for your youth to gather and chat. Stop overlooking those opportunities to create your

own web page and discover the uniqueness of others through your own creativity. Go and visit the web logs (blogs) of your youth and interact with them on their creative level. Set up an instant messaging account and chat with those who need your “instant influence” at important times in their day. Encourage through text messages. Pray in chat rooms. Become an *Instantaneous Youth Minister* and love your youth by meeting them where they are. You will be glad you did.

Photo: Passport values the students who invest in our campers each summer. Many of them are training to be vocational ministers in a variety of ways!

When you wish upon a star...



Some days, the best dreams we can dream are for those who come behind us. This January, during Martin Luther King Jr. weekend, we'll be dreaming big as three denominations gather for a youth conference that promises to be magical. The Episcopal Church, Presbyterian Church (USA) and Cooperative Baptist Fellowship will meet together at Walt Disney World for the first ever *Faith in 3D* tri-denominational student conference, *Passport style!*

The *dreams* these denominations are dreaming is one of sharing our diversity. As we come to walk these few steps together, we are excited about the rich learning students will take away from this event. As faith sharing takes place, we will be remembering another leader, MLK Jr., who lived a great dream with his life,



a dream where people *come* together. Passport, Inc. is committed to ecumenical principles, which is why this event is so exciting to us. We're striving, through our camps, online devotionals and other ministries, to create environments that lend themselves to a *true* sharing of traditions. *Faith in 3D* will be a wonderful event, one that we're excited to be a part of.

Watch your mailboxes in April for more about *Faith in 3D*, or visit the website - www.faithin3d.org - April 1, 2005.

PASSPORT
*Empowering Students, Embracing the World, Extending Grace*sm

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