

The Seeds Report

Seeds of Hope Publishers 2019

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*Loaves & fishes art (above) by Sally Lynn Askins,
Cross & wheat by Erin Kennedy Mayer*

From the President

The last few years have been very exciting for the Seeds ministry. In addition to the gifts of our ongoing supporters, we are the grateful beneficiary of three generous donations. Because of gifts from Carla Butler, Rosalie Beck and Deborah Harris—as well as a number of other gifts, we are more financially stable than ever before. We have replaced four ancient computers, and obtained a reliable Internet service and a stable web domain. We replaced the beyond-shabby couches in the office and bought ergonomically sound task chairs. We got better phone coverage.

Our staff and volunteers have been very busy. We were able to present the “Hunger in God’s World” workshop for two local churches in the past year, and we learned that the Atlanta Food Bank conducted the workshop as well. Last year, we partnered with the Baylor University Freedom School in leading young, at-risk students to produce *Freedom School Press*, a newsletter about hunger issues. [See the stories on page 7.] This year, our editor, Katie Cook, has agreed to work in the same way with homeless students who are working at the Freedom School.

As we compile this report, Katie and Council member Guilherme Almeida had just returned from the Republic of Georgia, where they conducted a project called *Creating Hope* with an interfaith youth group at the Peace Cathedral in Tbilisi. Katie led a “Writing to End Hunger” workshop and Guilherme led a “Theatre of the Oppressed” workshop. This was made possible by a gift from a Seeds friend that was designated for travel.

We plan to hold a Hunger Emphasis worship service, featuring “Where Does God’s Love Abide?,” this year’s packet from *Sacred Seasons*, during the 2019 National Hunger & Homelessness Awareness Week. We hope this will bring more attention to the events of that November week and also acquaint more people in our local community with

Please see “President” on page 5.

Right: Council President Michael Long, center, with editor Katie Cook, left, and longtime supporter Donna Kennedy at a Seeds fundraiser. Photo by Leslie Rosencrans.



Meet Our Seeds Volunteers



Linda Freeto (left), a frequent contributor to *Hunger News & Hope*, has received a number of Associated Church Press (ACP) awards for her Special Section reports in the HNH summer issues. Some of her special reports have been included in the annual *Best of the Christian Press*. Linda served on the Seeds Council of Stewards for a number of years before moving to the Fort Worth, TX, area. When she returned, she agreed to serve as our volunteer business manager for a time. More recently, Linda has once again joined the Council of Stewards.

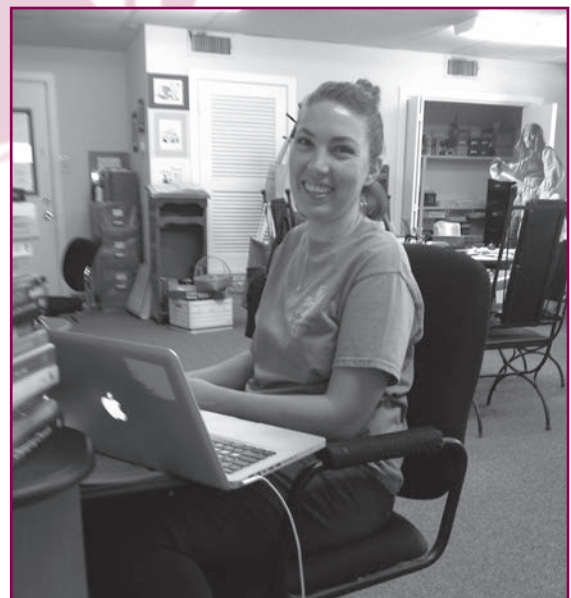
Rachel Boyle (right), a native of Grapevine, TX, was a Baylor University Professional Writing intern at Seeds of Hope in the fall of 2017 and the spring of 2018. During that time, she accomplished award-winning work in *Hunger News & Hope*. "What I liked best about Seeds," she writes, "was the environment. I was a very anxious and



introverted college student, so having such a supportive and encouraging supervisor for my first internship was the best thing that could have happened to me! I really felt like I could thrive, and by all accounts I did! Writing for Seeds also expanded my horizons. Many of the topics that I researched were things that I wouldn't have thought to research on my own, but were thought-provoking and gave me insight into hunger, disasters, faith questions and more: not just the topics, either, but the faces of the people affected by them."

Chelle Samaniego (below) is the social media editor for Seeds—and one of the award-winning writers for *Hunger News & Hope*. She lives in Hewitt with her husband Michael and their 10-year-old daughter, Karen. Karen is our youngest volunteer; she helps with mailings and other tasks, all done while dancing and singing around the office. She says her favorite things about the office are pink cookies and licorice jelly beans. Chelle has worked for many years with the McLennan County Hunger Coalition and the Heart of Texas Homeless Coalition. "I've been a writer and editor for about 25 years," she said, "and I've worked with hunger issues for a long time as well, so merging these two things are a perfect fit for me."

Sarah Westbrook (below), our summer 2018 intern, is from Longview, TX and is a Professional Writing graduate from Baylor University. She said that she learned much about becoming engaged in the issues in which one is passionate. She wrote, "I never thought I could use my voice to help others, but Seeds has taught me that you can use the gifts you're given to change the world."



Ellen Kuniyuki Brown (right) stepped into the position of copy editor for Seeds of Hope serendipitously. She had just completed a volunteer gig and was looking for something else in which to be involved and mentioned it in passing to Katie Cook, who was wondering where she was going to find a really good proofreader. The result was that Katie asked Ellen if she'd like to try her hand at copy editing for Seeds, to which Ellen replied, smiling, that she was picky. Katie immediately responded, "That's why I want you!"

Ellen retired from Baylor University after being the archivist in The Texas Collection for 39 years. Her volunteer interests have included being a construction volunteer with Waco Habitat for Humanity, the salad maker at the Gospel Café, a member of the Lake Shore Baptist Church food pantry group, and a "ferret" for the Act Locally Waco e-newsletter. She has edited *Waco Heritage & History*, proofread text for several books, and served as managing editor for *Texas Baptist History: The Journal of the Texas Baptist Historical Society*. She feels blessed to be involved with Seeds.



Adrienne Kruse (above), just graduated from Baylor University with a degree in Journalism and Social Justice. She served as an intern for Seeds during the fall 2018 and spring 2019 semesters. Seeds was a perfect fit for her because of her strong interest in justice issues. She spent a good deal of her time at Seeds researching and conducting interviews about how food security issues intersect with migration—particularly on the Texas-Mexico border. She plans to spend a year hiking along the Pacific US coast, and then to enroll in a criminal justice track at a seminary.

Associated Church Press Awards for Hunger News & Hope

For work in 2016:

- The "Best in Class" Award of Merit
- The Award of Excellence for a Theme Issue:
The Summer 2016 issue, "Women & Poverty"

For work in 2017:

- The "Best in Class" Award of Excellence
- The Award of Merit for a Feature Article in a Newspaper or Newsletter:
"The Perfect Storm: How Aid Cuts, Drought & War Will Kill 20 Million People This Year If We Don't Help" by Chelle Samaniego
- The Award of Merit for In-Depth Coverage in a Newspaper or Newsletter:
"Special Report: US Poverty, Food Security & the Federal Budget" by Linda Freeto
- Honorable Mention for a Theme Issue in a Newspaper or Newsletter:
The Summer 2017 issue, "How the Federal Budget Will Affect People in Poverty"

For work in 2018:

- The "Best in Class" Award of Merit
- Honorable Mention for a Devotional or Inspirational Article: "The Real Sermon" by Robert Darden
- The Award of Merit for a Feature Article:
"How 2017 Natural Hazards Affected Food Security" by Rachel Boyle
- Honorable Mention for In-Depth Coverage:
"Special Report: Water Issues at Home and Abroad" by Linda Freeto
- Honorable Mention for a Theme Issue:
The Summer 2018 issue, "From Water Crisis to Water Justice"

Meet Our Liturgical Team



Erin Conaway (left, on Easter Sunday with his wife, Carmen) grew up in Midland, TX. He graduated from Baylor University with a Bachelor of Arts in English and from George W. Truett Theological Seminary with a Master of Divinity. Erin served for nine years as associate pastor of South Main Baptist Church in Houston. He came in August of 2011 to serve as pastor at Seventh & James Baptist Church, where the Seeds offices are housed. Erin is passionate about Seeds because, he says, of “our constant need to be reminded about our hungry neighbors.” When Erin’s son and daughter were kids, they prayed every night, “Lord be with all the little children who didn’t get enough to eat today.” Erin says he hopes to be as spiritual as his children some day, and Seeds keeps him on that path.



Alec Ylitalo (right, eating a chocolate chip cookie, which he claims is the key to happiness) joined the *Sacred Seasons* liturgical team this spring. Alec was born in Montana and grew up in Longview, TX. After attending Baylor University, he earned a Master of Divinity from Brite Divinity School at Texas Christian University in Fort Worth. He then was ordained into the ministry by the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). He now serves as senior minister at Richfield Christian Church in Waco and is president of the Greater Waco Interfaith Council. He is active in supporting local social assistance programs and is a natural fit for our liturgical team.



Guilherme Feitosa de Almeida (left, with Seeds president Michael Long in the Republic of Georgia) is a senior lecturer in Musical Theater at Baylor University and an ordained Baptist minister. Guilherme earned his Bachelor of Church Music from the North Brazil Baptist Theological Seminary in his native country. He also received a Master of Music from Baylor University. He served in base communities of Northeast Brazil as pastoral musician and liturgist. He is immersed into music coaching and storytelling, liturgy and arts, pastoral practice of liberation theology, artists’ spiritual formation, ecumenical dialogue, and music and missions. A member of the Seeds Council of Stewards, he has written much of the liturgy for *Sacred Seasons* over the past several years. This year, he traveled with a Seeds team to Tbilisi, Georgia, where he conducted a Theatre of the Oppressed workshop.

President *continued from page 1*

Seeds resources. We are looking forward to a rousing local fundraiser event next spring.

We are also excited about an impressive number of Associated Church Press awards that *Hunger News & Hope* has received in the past few years. [See the sidebar on page 3.]

We are happy that the materials produced at Seeds continue to have an impact around the continent and the world. Subscribers to *Sacred Seasons* have ranged from a Salvation Army church in upper New York state and a Baptist church in Ontario, to the Catholic Archdiocese of Seattle, with a variety of churches and individuals in between. *Hunger News & Hope*, since it is sponsored, is distributed globally.

We are indebted to Chelle Samaniego, our volunteer social media editor and reporter, and to council member Linda Freeto, for their consistently excellent work on HNH—as well as our *Sacred Seasons* liturgical team. [See page 4.] We are also indebted to Ellen Kuniyuki Brown, our ever-diligent proofreader.

We want to thank Seeds council members Guilherme Almeida and Derek Dodson for their help in getting our technology up to speed. Thanks also go to Andrew Segrest, who has been extremely helpful with our phone service. In addition, we want to publicly thank our unsung hero, John Segrest, our “acting” business manager, for making sure our financial records are kept in good order.

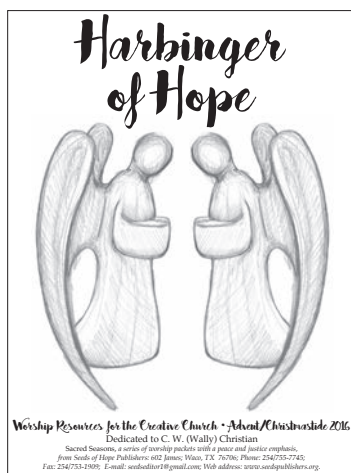
Our student interns make significant contributions in research and writing stories, as well as in assisting in the daily operational tasks at Seeds. Their dedication and skill make the production of Seeds editor and layout designer Katie Cook more efficient and more stress free. Without them, it would be difficult to continue our mission. They, in turn, are profoundly influenced by the nature of the work, as you can read on pages 2 and 3.

We also want to express our deep gratitude to Seventh & James Baptist Church, which has generously housed our ministry and supported us in many and sundry ways since Seeds first moved to Texas in 1991.

C. W. (Wally) Christian, a retired theology professor from Baylor University, was a frequent contributor to Seeds pub-

lications—especially *Sacred Seasons*, particularly with his Advent and Christmas poetry. Wally died on the first day of Advent in 2015, and his family designated Seeds as the recipient of memorial gifts in his honor.

The next year’s Advent/Christmas-tide worship packet, “Harbinger of Hope,” (left) was dedicated to him and was designed



around his poetry and sprinkled with drawings, by council vice president Sally Askins, of his carved crèche figures.

Another sad note is that Deborah Harris, a member of our Council of Stewards and constant volunteer, died in November 2016. She left us a generous legacy of brilliant writings, wonderful stories and unexpected financial support, but we still sorely miss her exuberance and creativity at our Council meetings. [See the story on page 6.]

These gifts, along with yours, allow our ministry to continue to publish hunger news and create worship materials, in keeping with our mission, “to seek out people of faith who feel called to care for the poor; and to affirm, enable and empower a variety of responses to the problems of hunger and poverty.”

On the back page of this report, you will find a donation form. Please consider making a contribution to the Seeds ministry, so that the good work of raising awareness of hunger and poverty, in this country and around the world, can continue.

Respectfully yours,

Michael Long, President
Seeds Council of Stewards

Teach Justice through Worship.



Sacred Seasons is a series of creative worship tools from Seeds of Hope Publishers to help raise awareness of hunger and justice issues. A year’s subscription of US\$100 includes three packets: Advent & Christmastide, Lent & Eastertide and a Hunger Emphasis resource kit for the fall. To order, call 254/755-7745 or e-mail seedseditor1@gmail.com. Single packets are US\$40. (Non-US subscriptions are \$115; individual packets are \$45.) For more information, go to www.seedspublishers.org.

Remembering Deborah Harris: *A Testament of Gratitude*

by Katie Cook

Since our last formal report, Seeds lost a beloved and integral member of our family. Deborah Harris served as the corresponding secretary for the Seeds Council of Stewards for a number of years, and she was our chief proofreader for even longer.

What she did, however, was infinitely more than those job titles indicate. She profoundly understood the Seeds mission, perhaps better than any of us, and she was wholly dedicated to do whatever she could to further that mission.

She read our publications with a wise and sensitive sense of the message we try to convey to our readers. And she was our biggest cheerleader. She was the one I called when I didn't know what to do with a story that wouldn't fall into place, when a worship packet wouldn't come together and when we needed a memorable way to express something. Her volunteer box in the Seeds office was labeled "Slogan Queen," and she signed her emails "SQ."

Here are a couple of examples of that skill: We had been publishing our worship packets for several years when someone suggested that we call them something a little more compelling than "Seeds worship packets." I couldn't think of anything, so I called Deborah and asked her what she thought. Every time I called her like this, she invariably called back and left a message in the middle of the night, with a list of possible themes. For the worship packets, she came up with "Sacred Seasons." In the same way, she named our Seeds art show "The Art of Compassion."

In addition to this, she wrote prayers, meditations, hymn lyrics and personal stories for all of our publications. There are so many of these that it would take a month to catalogue them all. In later years, she began drawing illustrations for us as well.

It probably won't surprise you, then, to know that Deborah was a professional lyricist. She was also a musician. She accomplished much in spite of numerous health issues over the last 30 years of her life. In the early 1970s, she toured as the lead soprano with a gospel group called the Horizons.

When the group stopped touring, she served the Burke Road Church of Christ in Pasadena, TX, as youth minister. Many of these "kids," as she still called them, came to her memorial service and sang some of the songs they performed all those years ago. Some came to sing for her during her last days in hospice.

While in Pasadena, Deborah earned a degree in journalism at the University of Houston. This is where she learned many of the skills we needed from her. She came to Waco in the early 1980s to work for the Word Inc. music company. Her lyrics have been combined with the music of such eminent composers as Kurt Kaiser and Mark Hayes. She had a fierce



compassion for anyone facing injustice, and her many hymns, poems, prayers and essays sing with that compassion.

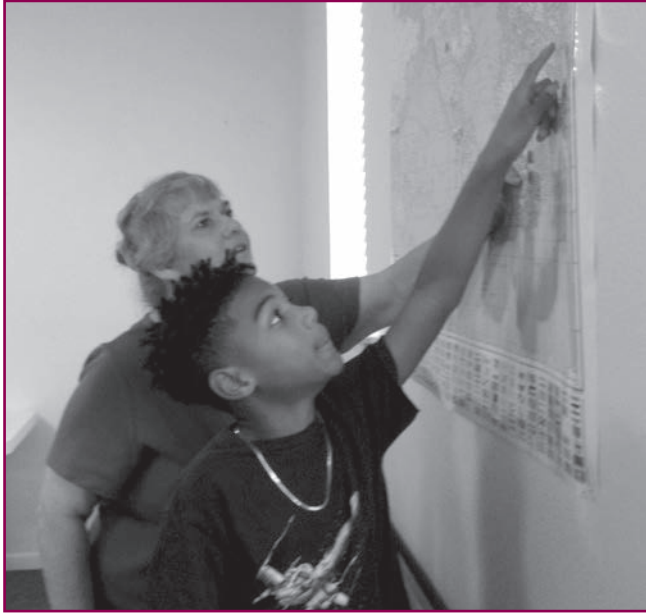
Deborah never had much money, but she was more generous than anyone I've ever known. She stopped and prayed with homeless people she saw in the CVS parking lot. She worried about people she encountered who were struggling with life. She shared the little she had. Just as she was about to succumb to her final battle with mesothelioma, she became part of a class-action suit that was expected to award her a great deal of money. She immediately went into action to make sure that her favorite ministries would benefit. Seeds was one of those ministries.

She died before the trial was over, changing the action to a wrongful death suit, which meant that the money rightfully belonged to her family. But her brother, Ronald Harris, and her sister, Ruth Ann Borrowman, chose to honor her final wishes and send that money to the ministries she had chosen. Early this year, we received a generous check from her estate that will enable us to continue our work for several years without financial struggles.

One of our stewards commented that Deborah must be looking down and dancing with joy at the good that she has been able to accomplish with this gift—against all odds. And that's in addition to her many years of faithful service.

—Katie Cook is the Seeds of Hope editor.

Introducing Two Seeds Projects



Hunger in God's World

H*unger in God's World* (HIGW) is a workshop curriculum that the Seeds staff has developed for churches over the years. The curriculum, created primarily for church groups, consists of four sessions. The first session, "Who Is Hungry and Why?", teaches participants about hunger around the world through group exercises. The second, "Hunger Has a Face," introduces personal stories of hungry people. "What Does God Want from Me?" explores biblical teachings about caring for poor and marginalized people. "What Can One Person Do?" includes definite steps that churches and individuals can take in responding to the needs of hungry people.

HIGW has been presented to youth groups, confirmation classes, seminary classes and adult study groups. Through a partnership with Caritas of Waco, the Seeds staff trained Linda Yoon, a student in the Baylor University School of Social Work, to conduct the workshop. Among other uses of the curriculum, Yoon translated it into Korean and presented it to a local children's group.

Several years ago, Conway Del Conti, Hunger Coordinator for the Waco Regional Baptist Association (WRBA) in Waco, TX, paired the workshop with the innovative "Cooking Matters" program from "No Kid Hungry" to help women in a housing development find ways to overcome hunger and create community in their neighborhood.

In 2018, Alexis Weaver of the Atlanta Food Bank employed HIGW for a training there. Later that summer, the Seeds staff presented the workshop to the youth and children of Greater Bosqueville Baptist Church in Bosqueville, TX. (See the photo above.) In February 2019, a Seeds team spent four Wednesday evenings with the youth of Calvary Baptist Church in Waco, TX, leading them through the workshop material.

—For more information or for a pdf of the curriculum, email seedseditor1@gmail.com.

Freedom School Press

Early in the summer of 2018, Seeds partnered with the Baylor School of Education's Freedom School to create a learning track for reporting about hunger. The Freedom School curriculum comes from the Children's Defense Fund and is inspired by the Freedom Schools of the 1960s Civil Rights Movement. Baylor conducted its second Freedom School in Waco, TX, that summer.

This learning track was inspired by a 2003 day camp in which Seeds staff and Megan Sims, then the children's minister for Seventh & James Baptist Church, taught a group of children how to report on local agencies that helped to get food to people in need. The end product of that camp was the newsletter *Hungry for Hope*. When Baylor Freedom School director Lakia Scott heard about the Hungry for Hope camp, she immediately wanted to add a similar learning experience to the Freedom School curriculum for 2018.

The result was the *Freedom School Press* project. The young scholars spent time researching various issues of hunger and creating stories and art about what they found. They visited the World Hunger Relief, Inc. Training Farm in Elm Mott and wrote about what they saw. During one session, they met and interviewed Sherry Castello, the head chef and organizer for the Gospel Café in Waco. (See the photo below.)

That evening, Sherry left a voice message at the Seeds office, saying, "I want to thank you again for the invitation to visit with the Freedom School students today. That is the most joy I have had in a long time. When I left there, I just couldn't quit smiling. I appreciate the opportunity you provided today, and I love those kids."



Note: Shortly before press time for this report, a Seeds team returned from the Republic of Georgia, where they conducted the inaugural "Creating Hope" project with an interfaith youth group. The project includes a "Writing to End Hunger" workshop and a "Theatre of the Oppressed" workshop. Stay tuned for more about this work.

Seeds of Hope Publishers

Staff

Editor: L. Katherine Cook
Acting Business Manager: John Segrest

Council of Stewards

Sara Alexander
Guilherme Almeida
Sally Lynn Askins, V. Pres.
Meg Cullar
Derek Dodson
Linda Freeto
Sandy Londos, Recording Secretary
B. Michael Long, President

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Andy Loving
Kathryn Mueller
Jacqueline L. Saxon
Ken Sehested
Jon Singletary
Leslie Withers

Statement of Purpose

Seeds of Hope is a private, independent group of believers responding to a common burden for the poor and hungry of God's world, and acting on the strong belief that biblical mandates to feed the poor were not intended to be optional. The group intends to seek out people of faith who feel called to care for the poor; and to affirm, enable and empower a variety of responses to the problems of poverty.

Editorial Address

Seeds of Hope is housed by the community of faith at Seventh & James Baptist Church. The mailing address is 602 James Avenue, Waco, TX 76706; Phone: 254/ 755-7745; Email: seedseditor1@gmail.com; Web: www.seedspublishers.org. Seeds of Hope, Inc., holds the 501(c)3 nonprofit tax status.

Seeds of Hope Budget 2019

REVENUES

Fundraisers	\$ 5,000.00
Gifts	\$ 5,000.00
Grants	\$ 0.00
Subscriptions	\$ 900.00
Balance of Designated Fund	\$ 4,936.84
Other Financing Sources	\$ 11,163.16

TOTAL REVENUES \$ 27,000.00

EXPENDITURES

Bank Charges	\$ 0.00
Employee	
Salary	\$ 15,000.00
Insurance (Health & Life)	\$ 1,750.00
Seeds Contribution to IRA	\$ 450.00
Seeds FICA Taxes	\$ 1,150.00
Travel & Conferences 1	\$ 3,500.00
Fundraising	\$ 800.00
Gifts	\$ 100.00
Grants	\$ 0.00
Miscellaneous	\$ 500.00
Office	
Books & Subscriptions*	\$ 50.00
Computers*	\$ 100.00
Dues & Fees	\$ 439.55
Internet*	\$ 498.72
Other	\$ 0.43
Postage & Shipping	\$ 400.00
Printing	\$ 1,500.00
Supplies*	\$ 500.00
Telephone	\$ 261.30

TOTAL EXPENDITURES \$ 27,000.00

From Designated Fund Balance | Travel & Conferences
* Supplies, Equipment & Infrastructure

If you would like to support us monthly, please check the level that's best for you and return this form with a check made out to Seeds of Hope, Inc., to 602 James Ave., Waco, TX 76706. You can also pay online at www.seedspublishers.org. Just hit the "donate" button and send an email to seedseditor1@gmail.com saying you're signing up to be a sustaining partner. We are now able to receive gifts of stocks, bonds, mutual funds & other securities. Contact us and we'll tell you how to donate with a brokerage gift. We are profoundly grateful for all that you do to help us continue our work.

Yes, I want to support the Seeds of Hope ministry!

___ Mustard Seed Partner ___ Sprouts Partner ___ Harvest Partner ___ Brokerage ___ Other
 \$10 monthly \$25 monthly \$50 monthly gift

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Email Address: _____