



Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Louisiana

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2-5-15

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## **Rachel Held Evans to Speak at Stagg Tolbert Forum in November**



[Read Evans bio](#)

Thanks to the generosity of St. Charles Avenue Baptist Church and the Mabel Palmer Lectures in partnership with the Stagg-Tolbert Forum, nationally recognized Christian author Rachel Held Evans will be coming to Louisiana. She will be in New Orleans November 7-8 where she will speak at the Forum and preach in the Sunday morning service at St. Charles Church.

Evans first book, *Evolving in Monkey Town* (Zondervan, 2010), explores the relationship between faith and doubt and recounts the challenges of asking tough questions about Christianity in the context of the Bible Belt. Her second book, *A Year of Biblical Womanhood* (Thomas Nelson

Oct, 2012), documents a year-long experiment in which she attempted to follow all of the Bible's instructions for women as literally as possible.

However most people know Evans for her thoughtful and engaging blog, which just keeps growing and growing, with over a quarter million visits each month.

For any unfamiliar with her writing, a good place to start is this blog post [Blessed are the Uncool](#). There is also a wealth of information about Evans and her writing at her [website](#).

## TNG - The Next Generation



*by Kyle Kelley, CBF-LA Interim Coordinator*

"I'm so glad to be in a room with a bunch of young people," Patsy Perritt was overheard to say. As "first lady" to the incoming CBF-LA Moderator, Ron Perritt, she was present with him for the Together for Hope retreat of the "ALMA" (Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Arkansas) region. In the brisk cool Mississippi air, we came together at the Timber Creek Camp in Pulaski to refresh, swap stories, share the load and do a little knitting. That is, stitching the tapestry of partnership in the great work of Together for Hope.

She was right. Our line workers at the retreat, the women getting it done as missionary/coordinators/practitioners for Together for Hope were all "20-somethings." They are Jenny Hodge, from Louisiana, Lane Riley from Mississippi and Molly Palmer and Stacey Henderson from Arkansas. These are intelligent, committed, passionate and creative souls who in Eugene Peterson's words are practicing a "long obedience." The work of Christian Community Development is not the work of a day and not for the faint.



**Team Together for Hope:** from left, Jenny Hodge-Louisiana; Stacey Henderson and Molly Palmer-Arkansas; Lane Riley-Mississippi; and Stephanie Vance CBF National Together for Hope Manager;

We have to prepare for the struggles. These are hard places. It takes grit, patience and faith to stick with a calling "even when God doesn't do the thing we think God is supposed to do," stated Christian Byrd, the also rather youngish Coordinator for CBF-Mississippi in the evening devotional. Christian took us on an Emmaus Walk through the night chill reenacting that journey of the two disciples whose world had collapsed only to be "strangely warmed" by the Voice who somehow seemed familiar. Then the scales fell from their eyes. "The same road by which we walk away from God is the same road by which we return."

God still surprises, still brings new vision. One of those surprises is the young faces, the youthful energy.

A few years ago at a national CBF meeting, my daughter commented on how old everyone was. That was then. Now at General Assembly, us gray hairs (or gray beards) are becoming the minority. Last year they ran out of room in the children and youth programs. Families, young people -- new life is upon us in the Fellowship.

I remember hearing former Global Missions Coordinator Rob Nash say his main job was to get all the old folks out of the way in CBF so the young folks could lead. He seems to have succeeded and in fact following his own advice was himself gone in a couple years. His replacement? It is the "twenty-something-looking" (though actually in his 40's) Steven Porter, who is bringing fresh innovation and paradigm-shifting passion to missions not merely as a "project," but as a lifestyle. "Exegete your community," he says. We may have to look that one up.

And in Louisiana, did it sneak up on you? How about that insurgence of young pastors serving in CBF churches around our state - Griff Martin, Elizabeth Lott, Chris Thacker, Jeff Raines, John Henson?

Post-modern, post-denominational, post-blah-blah-blah, whatever you call it, we are in a different time. We are blessed with fresh, new leadership, pastors who get it, this new time. They are all about building faith communities not with new gimmicks but with new engagement, drilling deeper in the timeless Gospel.

The joke is that Washington DC is run by "twenty-somethings." The politicians are out raising money, cutting ribbons and acting important. They don't have time to read, much less write the laws or tend to policy. That falls to the young staffers who work incredibly long hours doing tireless research.

We are blessed with our own tireless "twenty-somethings" at the front line in the Together for Hope work. Don't put them on a pedestal. Don't tell them they are anything more than ordinary saints. They will ask you where God is calling you in this work and give you a job.

Maybe the best way they are leading us is by modeling partnership, cooperation, working together. They need our prayers and support and we need to follow them.

Recent articles from me have focused on the rich legacy of our cloud of witnesses in Louisiana and those inspiring builders, some of whom are still with us. I meant all of that. What a foundation. What is that cloud doing now? What else but cheering on the next generation.

## Help Wanted Ads

*by Mary van Rheenen*



Keith Holmes and Mary van Rheenen are a husband-wife missionary team (field personnel) with CBF. Based in Holland, their work is with the Romany (Gypsy) people of Europe. They have 2 daughters Ellen and Rebecca. Keith's home church is University Baptist in Baton Rouge.

Both of our daughters are looking for work, Ellen here in the Netherlands and Rebecca in America. They are taking a break from formal education to get educated in a different way. Keith and I, on the other hand, are not scanning the "help wanted" ads. No, we're more inclined to write them.

Keith has gotten help, lots of help, with his next project with Faith Comes by Hearing ([www.Bible.is](http://www.Bible.is)). While recording projects in Romani

languages take precedence, he is also available to do the recording of the New Testament in other European languages. He has done a total of four New Testament recordings with them so far, two in Romani languages (Sinti; Eastern Slovak Romani) and two in other European languages (Portuguese; contemporary Polish).

He'd been asked to look into a Turkish translation. So he did. And he found that there were competent people in Turkey who could do the recording. He just had to set it up in the beginning (one week) and wrap it up in the end (another week). Since it takes 6-8 weeks to do a dramatized recording of the New Testament, Keith and I were rejoicing over this answer to prayer.

Next week, January 19-23, Keith will be in Istanbul for the setting up. He still needs a lot of help. Christians in Turkey will be finding the "voices," providing a recording studio, arranging the "proof listening," and doing the actual recording. Keith will be training them to use the Faith Comes by Hearing programs. He will be making the final arrangements. He will be working in a different country, a different culture, and a different language. He cannot do his part and they cannot do their part without prayer support.

**HELP WANTED:** 3-7 prayer volunteers to pray specifically for this project. No travel or previous experience required. All applicants will receive specific prayer requests and regular updates. To apply, hit reply to this e-mail.

I have also gotten lots of help with projects in the Republic of Moldova. Last year, seven volunteers from the Dutch Baptist churches here in Arnhem went with me to work with Romany believers there. Together, we did a vacation Bible school program for children; visited Christians in another Romany village, did a day camp for teenaged girls; started activities with teenaged boys; visited in the village and organized a fun afternoon for the women. This summer, I hope to go again.

**HELP WANTED:** 3-7 volunteers to work with Romany believers in the village of Vulcanesti. June 19-July 6 for children's work/youth work. Requirements include willingness to give and receive spiritually; flexibility; reasonably good health. Knowledge of Romanian, Russian, or Usari Romani helpful but not necessary. For more information, go to <http://www.thefellowship.info/region/#Europe> or contact me directly.

This past year our partners in the Republic of Moldova have been helped through a grant from the Texas Christian Life Commission. They have been able to deliver food packages to the most vulnerable people in their village. This help has made a significant difference, in the short term. In the coming year, our partners in Moldova hope to work further towards a long-term difference. They want to help two families in the

village begin raising chickens. They, like many Romany and many Moldovans, want to find sustainable ways of making a living without leaving the country in search of work.

HELP WANTED: see

<http://www.thefellowship.info/missions/serve/asyougo/> for descriptions of three open positions working with Romany, including the Romany Economic Development Coordinator.

I have also been very busy with Davar, a reading readiness program designed for people who still need to learn how to learn and for people who need to learn how to teach them. Soon I will begin learning myself, by taking an online course on multilingual education (see latest entry on [cbf-romany-ministries.blogspot](http://cbf-romany-ministries.blogspot.com) or Facebook page). I'm grateful for the help we've received in developing this from our daughter Ellen, who is illustrating the lessons, to our friend Alina Ivan who has begun translating them into Romanian. It's easy to see how much help is still wanted. It's also good to look around and see how much help has already been received.

Still praying,

Mary van Rheenen & Keith Holmes

#### **Praise and Thanksgiving:**

- \*Great visit Poznan, Poland, after Christmas, and Keith's brother Ted in Warsaw over New Year's;
- \*Partners in Turkey, Moldova, the Netherlands, and America;
- \*For Romany who have come to faith, in part through the resources you have helped provide;
- \*For people with the gift of giving.

#### **Prayer requests:**

- \*For Keith as he travels to Turkey, Jan. 19-23, and for good communication with the recording team there;
- \*For Mircea, Ana, and their baby son Ruslan, a Roma family in Moldova;
- \*For our daughters Rebecca and Ellen as they sort through future options;
- \*For Christian business persons called to create sound economic development opportunities in Moldova.

Contributions to the Offering for Global Missions (or Keith Holmes Ministry), Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, 160 Clairemont Avenue, Suite 500 Decatur, GA 30030 make this work possible (NOTE CHANGE OF ADDRESS).

[See video of their work and other posts.](#)

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