

# The Gathering

of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of North Carolina

Bringing Baptists of North Carolina Together for Christ-Centered Ministry

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## Identity Is Important

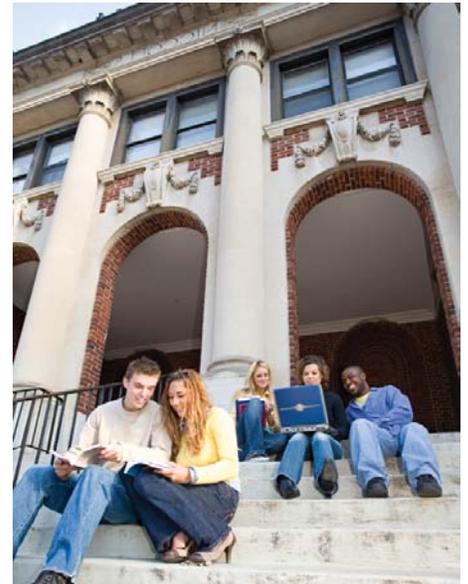
by Rick Jordan, Church Resources Coordinator

A year ago, I ordered ink pen and mechanical pencil samples from several vendors with our new logo, so that our young people attending CBFNC events would begin recognizing CBFNC. We want to begin early in helping them identify themselves as “our kind” of Baptists.

Now, however, every other month or so, I get unsolicited samples of ink pens from several vendors. Sometimes these samples actually have our name on the pen. Unfortunately, some samples don't communicate what we'd want

club and make efforts to encourage participation and leadership by women as well as men. Then, there's another one that reads “Cooperative Baptist Fell.” Not a happy thought, is it? I won't be buying any of those ink pens either.

Identity is important. We've heard over and over that we are in a post-denominational era. That is, twenty-first century persons (particularly younger adults) just don't care about the label on the church yard sign. Their cry might be summarized in the title of a recent book, *Just give me Jesus!* That's a pretty neat theory and maybe it can work if you can live with a faith that is “just me and Jesus.” But if you live in a community of faith, you are going to become identified with that community's identity. Do you identify yourself as one of the Jesus followers who worship in contemplative silence or who rock-n-roll? Do you identify with the Jesus followers who have a Pope or with those who pride themselves on being “Independent”? Do you identify with those who believe in free will or predestination or even double predestination? These are questions of



style, ecclesiology and theology and they are not the only options, of course.

There are four universities with divinity schools in North Carolina that identify themselves as partners with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of North Carolina: Campbell, Duke (Baptist House), Gardner-Webb, and Wake Forest. Every student who attends these schools is not necessarily Baptist or even a moderate Baptist or even a Protestant. But many students are “our kind” of Baptist, and many who are not yet our kind will become so as they progress in their education.

Continued on page 6.

“We are proud to support these young leaders who choose to identify themselves with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of North Carolina.”

to get across. For example, one says “Cooperative Baptist Fellows.” I suppose there could be an organization called the Cooperative Baptist Fellows, but we take pains not to make CBF into a boy's

### CBFNC 2008 General Assembly

#### “Calling Cards: Hearing and Responding to God's Call”

April 11-12, 2008  
Forest Hills Baptist Church,  
Raleigh, NC

With Keynote Speaker  
Rev. Julie Pennington-Russell  
Pastor, FBC, Decatur, GA

*Schedule* includes Welcome and Orientation, Ministry Workshop Sessions, Fellowship Dinner, Evening and Morning Worship and Business Session. Some of the areas of our *ministry workshops* include Missions, Practical Helps for the Local Church, Bible Study, Religious and Spiritual Understanding, Arts and the Christian Life, Chaplains and Pastoral CareGivers, and CBF Administration. *At the 2007 General Assembly, we offered over 65 ministry workshops.*

**More ministry workshop titles, details and registration available at [www.cbfn.org](http://www.cbfn.org). Plan now to attend!**