

ONE LORD ONE VOICE ONE VISION

# ONE

MAGAZINE

A Free Will Baptist Magazine

•••

**From Atheism  
to Faith**

How to Sweat  
the Small Stuff

**DECLINING  
THE DUCK  
COMMANDER**

Beyond the  
Comfort Zone

•••

# Hope for Bulgaria

APRIL-MAY 2014 | [WWW.ONEMAG.ORG](http://WWW.ONEMAG.ORG)





**DALLAS**  
SEPTEMBER 18-19, 2014

**LOUISVILLE**  
OCTOBER 2-3, 2014



# CONNECT

**DALLAS SPEAKERS**

- JOSH GRIFFIN** 
- WALKER MOORE** 
- LET & LINDIE PARROTT** 
- ALLYSON EVANS** 
- BRIAN HAYNES** 
- RICHARD ROSS** 
- GREG STIER** 
- LYDIA RANDALL** 
- WANCEY ARRINGTON** 
- KURT BRUNER** 

and many more

a **family ministry** conference  
connecting church and home  
through generational discipleship

**REGISTER NOW**   

Use Discount Code:  
D6FWB14 to save more



[d6family.com](http://d6family.com)



#D62014

**LOUISVILLE SPEAKERS**

- KYLE IDLEMAN** 
- CHRISTAL EVANS HURST** 
- LVA TERKERST FOWLER** 
- RYAN FRANK** 
- LARRY SWINDOL** 
- TOMMY SWINDOL** 
- TONY EVANS** 
- TIMOTHY PAUL JONES** 
- EREDON EGGERICH** 
- HEIDI HENSLEY** 

and many more



# ONE

## MAGAZINE

TO COMMUNICATE TO  
FREE WILL BAPTISTS A  
UNIFYING VISION OF OUR  
ROLE IN THE EXTENSION  
OF GOD'S KINGDOM.

ONE MAGAZINE  
ISSN 1554-3323  
VOLUME 10 ISSUE 1



36

Published bi-monthly by the  
National Association of  
Free Will Baptists, Inc.,  
5233 Mt. View Road,  
Antioch, TN 37013-2306.

Non-profit periodical postage rate paid  
at Antioch, TN 37011 and  
additional offices.

POSTMASTER,  
SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO:  
ONE Magazine  
PO Box 5002  
Antioch, TN 37011-5002.



43

## Articles

- 06** *Hope for Bulgaria*  
Meet the men and women whose  
heartbeat is bringing the gospel of  
hope to Bulgaria.
- 17** Taking the Gospel to the  
Island of Enchantment
- 18** Beyond the Comfort Zone
- 20** Witnessing to a Galaxy  
Far Away
- 23** Growing Through  
Outreach
- 26** My Name Is Leader
- 34** Declining the Duck  
Commander
- 36** How to Sweat the  
Small Stuff
- 38** Adapting to the Plan  
of God
- 40** Is an Annuity Right for  
You?
- 43** The High Cost of Cutting  
Curriculum
- 46** Fury Mixed With Grief



18

## Columns

- 4** First Glimpse:  
And Counting . . .
- 29** Leader Profile:  
Donald Myers
- 32** Intersect: Texts, Apps,  
and Glowing Rectangles,  
Part 2
- 42** Brown on Green:  
Weathering the Storm
- 54** One to One

## News

- 15** Around the World
- 25** Across the Nation
- 28** From WNAC and  
Master's Men
- 30** At Welch College
- 49** NYC News
- 50** About the Denomination

# First Glimpse >> AND COUNTING...

More than a year ago, I prompted the *ONE Magazine* editorial staff to begin making preparations for April-May 2014 and the tenth anniversary issue of the magazine. Through a series of meetings, we brainstormed ways to make it memorable, with an unforgettable cover, highlights from the first decade in print, and editorials underscoring the importance of this milestone. We solicited feedback from readers, announcing that the anniversary issue would be accompanied by a simultaneous redesign, making it a truly remarkable occasion in the life of the magazine.

Manuscripts arrived, the cover took shape, and I began preparing this column. I had a delightful time researching the numbers—magazines delivered (upwards of 3.1 million), articles published, addresses corrected, new subscribers, online readers, countries reached, and so on. The figures were staggering, and with every new total, I celebrated a bit more.

Because math has never been my strong point, I recruited some help from the sharp, young mind of Anna York, the *ONE Magazine* database manager, who often assists with research. I encouraged her to look over my statistics for accuracy and to add her own. With her help and a plethora of fascinating data, I was confident the editorial would “blow the minds” of readers.

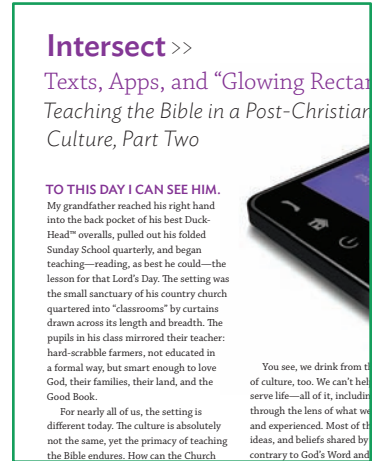
Well, it blew the mind of at least one reader when Anna poked her head into my office several hours later and announced that all my figures were correct except one—the most important one. *ONE Magazine* has only been in print nine years—nine, not ten. It wasn’t my finest editorial moment.

When I confessed my (obvious) mistake to Editor-in-Chief Keith Burden, I reminded him that he hired me for letters and words. Not numbers. And, for the record, the April-May 2015 issue is well ahead of schedule.

Never fear...while the anniversary celebration has been postponed a year, the magazine redesign is right on time.

As you explore these pages, you will encounter a number of changes designed to maximize your enjoyment.

**Readability.** Although designers kept the existing (and well-loved) body type, it has been optimized for easy reading. A new headline and subtext font provides maximum word count while maintaining readability. Articles now feature dark text on a white or light background, the number one design request from our readers.



**Navigation.** A streamlined Table of Contents page will point the way to articles of interest, while simplified headers on columns and news pages make them easy to locate.



EDITOR-IN-CHIEF: Keith Burden MANAGING EDITOR: Eric Thomsen ASSOCIATE EDITORS: Ken Akers, David Brown, Danny Conn, Elizabeth Hodges, Ida Lewis, Ray Lewis, Deborah St. Lawrence, Sara Poston, Stephen Nelson, Jack Williams LAYOUT & DESIGN: Randall House Publications DESIGN MANAGER: Andrea Young DESIGN: Sondra Blackburn PRINTING: Randall House Publications.

While *ONE Magazine* is provided to the reader free of charge, tax-deductible donations are both accepted and appreciated. To make a donation, simply send check or money order to *ONE Magazine*, PO Box 5002, Antioch, TN 37011-5002.

PHOTO CREDIT: Tim Awtrey, Mark Cowart, Eric Thomsen, Shutterstock.com, Istockphoto.com, Stockxpert.com, Designpics.com.





## Letters:

Have something to say?  
Say it!

The editors of ONE Magazine look forward to hearing from readers. Your feedback, comments, and suggestions are necessary and appreciated.

Email [editor@nafwb.org](mailto:editor@nafwb.org) or send correspondence to:

ONE Magazine  
Letters to the Editor  
PO Box 5002  
Antioch, TN 37011-5002

ONE Magazine reserves the right to edit published letters for length and content.

**Design.** Readers will continue to enjoy clean, simple design, with a few subtle changes that add up to big improvements. Space has been added between lines and columns, and a rigid text grid has been relaxed for reader comfort. News pages reflect greater flexibility, and information graphics will often accompany stories and statistics for increased comprehension.

One other important change must be noted: the tagline on the cover has changed from, *The Magazine for Free Will Baptists* to *A Free Will Baptist Magazine*. Why? After nine (not ten) years, the influence of ONE Magazine has expanded and broadened far beyond the borders of our own movement—a magazine produced by Free Will Baptists for everyone. **ONE**

*Note: As always, the editors of ONE Magazine welcome your input and suggestions. Email [editor@nafwb.org](mailto:editor@nafwb.org) to share comments and criticism regarding the changes.*

ERIC THOMSEN, MANAGING EDITOR

### Across the Nation >>

#### McComas Joins Home Missions Staff



Antioch, TN—The Home Missions Department welcomes Rev. Jim McComas to serve as the director of church revitalization. Jim was born and raised in Northeast Ohio. He accepted Christ at age six, and surrendered to the call of God on His life to preach the gospel at the early age of nine.

Jim often filled the pulpit of his home church, preached regularly on the radio, weekly in three local nursing homes, and spent a summer on the mission field in France, all before graduating from high school.

Jim served as senior pastor of Canaan FWB Church in Creston, Ohio, for 21 years. He led the church through two building programs and many years of continuous growth. In addition to his preaching and teaching ministry at Canaan, Jim served as vice-chairman of the Board of the Ohio State Association of Free Will Baptists for many years. He continues to write a column in The Ambassador magazine on Ohio Free Will Baptist History, and was the baritone singer and songwriter for "The Representatives Quartet" for 25 years.

During his years as pastor at Canaan, Jim was very involved the community. He taught over two hundred junior high students each

As

S  
han  
part  
deg  
Wel  
Aur

Mi

Dec  
day  
The

Dav  
in 2  
exp  
kno  
in o

# Turn a Double Play...



## 21st Annual National Golf Challenge August 7

Compete in the National Golf Challenge at Windtree Golf Course in Mt. Juliet, Tennessee.

## National Softball Tournament August 8-9

Enjoy two full days of high-impact tournament play against Free Will Baptist softball teams from across the nation.

Reserve Your Spot Today! (877) 767-8039 | [www.fwbmastersmen.org](http://www.fwbmastersmen.org)





# HOPE *for* BULGARIA

In December 2005, the International Missions Board opened Bulgaria as a field of work for Free Will Baptists. In April 2006, Tim and Lydia Awtrey were approved to pioneer the work in the difficult, often hopeless country. The December 2006 issue of ONE Magazine featured Lydia's story, "Growing Up Communist" and the Awtreys' vision for the future in "Bulgaria or Bust."

Fast forward to 2014. Though Satan has attacked and sought to destroy their efforts, God has prevailed, and Tim and Lydia have a passionate congregation and a team whose heartbeat is to bring hope to Bulgaria. Meet the Bulgaria team in the following pages. Feel their passion for the men, women, and children who have never heard the gospel; heard the name of Jesus; held a Bible; or stepped inside a church.





# Ex Nihilo

By Tim Awtrey

## *Yanna ran in the door from school.*

“Daddy, look what I have!”

To be honest, it didn’t look very impressive. She held a styrofoam cup with the letters Y-A-N-N-A written on it. “What is it?” I asked, trying to sound excited.

“It’s a seed...and we add water to the cup...and it will be a big plant!”

So, we poured water in the dirt cup, and Yanna stood by waiting for the plant to spring up. Ten minutes later she walked into the kitchen dejected.

“It didn’t work. There’s no flower.”

Laughing to myself, I tried to explain to my five-year-old that it would take more water, more sunlight, and more time for the tiny seed to grow into a beautiful flower.

I think back on that event ten years ago and laugh; only I see myself in Yanna’s shoes. I am like her—running to the little dirt cup every five minutes to see what has changed. It’s not a plant I’m looking at, but a small church at the backdoor of Europe, where we are pioneering a church planting movement. After every church service, home Bible study, discipleship meeting, or discussion over coffee, we find ourselves running back to that dirty cup over and over again to see what has changed. More often than not, all we see is dirt.

Eventually, however, a feeble, little, green shoot pokes out of the dirt. To others it doesn’t look like much, but to the watcher it seems like a mighty oak. After watering and waiting, after a thousand late-night meetings, too much coffee in smoke-filled cafés, verbal abuse, indifference, and sleepless nights, it appears. A little sprout appears out of nothing. Yesterday, only a cup of dirt and today God has miraculously produced a living plant!

Last night I sat at a weekly Bible study in wonder. A few years ago there was nothing, but out of nothing God created life. A living, breathing community of people who are reading the Bible, praying for their neighbors, and living out their faith amidst the storms of Bulgarian society. To my right sat Iliyanka. Like me, she is a foreigner in Bulgaria. During the meeting, we studied Mark 10, where Jesus told His disciples that no one leaves home or family for His sake without receiving much more. Iliyanka, with a big smile on her face, shared how she had to leave her family in another country, but God provided an even bigger family in the church in Svishtov. Her words echo: “The words of Jesus are true! He has given me so much more!” Everyone in the room was encouraged by her testimony. We see our little sprout grow a bit more.

Next to Iliyanka is her husband Doran. He is the exception in our fellowship. His mother took him to church as a child. In our church in Svishtov, only Doran and one other person grew up in a church. It is rare in Bulgaria. Most people in our congregation have never stepped in a church or opened a Bible before attending New Life FWB Church. Doran’s early church upbringing has given him a faithfulness rarely found anywhere. As a young husband, he struggles to care for his family in the harsh economic environment, yet he never complains. He

thanks God in the midst of his trials—the mark of a faithful believer.

I was also glad to see Gergana at the Bible study. She has been a believer only a few years, but she has become one of my heroes in the faith. If there was a continuation to Hebrews 11, I’m sure her name would be there.

A few years ago, she showed up to a Bible study in our home. We gave her a Bible. In her mid-30s, it was the first time she had opened a Bible. After looking at it for a few minutes she shyly asked, “What are the big and little numbers for?” She had never seen a book with chapter and verse numbers.

Today, Gergana leads worship at our church. It is amazing to see how she passionately praises God on Sunday mornings when I know she has risen early to care for her blind and bedridden grandmother; cooked breakfast for her daughter and her husband who has been desperately ill for the past ten years; all while working six days a week. A hero of the faith! She praises God in the storms of life. And she sits in Bible study and thanks God for the church family who stands by her and lifts her up through the struggle. Another green shoot pokes through the dirt.

Next to Gergana sits Viktor. A few months ago, he started attending church for the first time in his life. It is amazing to see someone in his or her late 40s

***Most people in our congregation have never stepped in a church or opened a Bible before attending New Life FWB Church.***





who hears the Good News of Jesus for the first time. He admits he doesn't know much about Jesus, but he knows enough to share his new faith with his coworkers—in spite of the fact that they make fun of him. He warns his coworkers that it's not smart to laugh at God. I agree.

Last in the group is Vladimir. He confesses that he is 70% on the way to Jesus. Yet, he's not sure about all this talk about Jesus. Over the past few years, one of the best criticisms I have heard about our church is that we talk *too much* about Jesus. Yes, we do. But Vladimir is here because there is something intriguing about Jesus. He wants to hear more. We know that just like our little seed of a church, the Holy Spirit is continually watering the seed of faith within Vladimir. And it's a wonder to watch it grow.

*Ex nihilo*...out of nothing. How does God create something out of nothing? I don't know. I only know that a few years ago, there was not a single healthy

church in Svishtov. Most of Bulgaria lacks healthy churches. We strive for God's kingdom in a land where less than half of one percent of the people follow Jesus.

Countless cities and towns are strewn with dried up and withered remains of churches-that-could-have-been as many missionaries have given up and gone home because of the harsh spiritual climate of Bulgaria. Free Will Baptist International Missions has decided to send people to the hard places, to plant new life in spiritually dry ground. As the prophet said, "For I am about to do something new. See, I have already begun! Do you not see it? I will make a pathway through the wilderness. I will create rivers in the dry wasteland" (Isaiah 43:19).

Our little dirt cup is springing to life. Where there was nothing, now there is a community of believers in Svishtov. In Varna, on the Black Sea coast, Trif and

Vanya Trifinov have started a second Free Will Baptist church. Jonathan and Amy Postlewaite are carving out new relationships with Bulgarian families and soon Josh and Lydia Provow will be on the field, breaking new ground. Where to next? I'm not sure. But I do know that if we keep watering, God can bring life out of nothing! **ONE**

**About the Writer:** The Awtrey family is pioneering a Free Will Baptist church planting movement in Bulgaria. The first phase of the work includes establishing a healthy Free Will Baptist church in Svishtov to serve as a model for future church plants throughout the country.

### Want more?

Josh and Lydia Provow tell their story in a video on the Mission's website ([www.fwbgo.com](http://www.fwbgo.com)). The team sends out an e-newsletter, "Hope for Bulgaria," every two weeks. Email Tim ([tawtrey@fwbgo.com](mailto:tawtrey@fwbgo.com)) and ask to be added to their list. *IMPulse* 3.2 featured two segments on the Awtreys; order the DVD or download from the website.

## It's all about the shoes!



Tim Awtrey

**Much of the world is divided into two camps—shoe fanatics and shoe haters.**

Some of you have more shoes than you need. For you, biblical promises include finding a "land flowing with high heels

and comfy slippers." Shoe haters often focus on the fact that shoes smell. The more shoes, the more smell. As someone who teaches a class of 14-year-old boys, I consider myself a bit of a specialist on smelly shoes.

On my desk, I have a picture of a stack of shoes outside our front door. I want to explain why I meditate on this picture. In Bulgaria, a long-held, Bulgarian custom requires visitors to remove their shoes before entering someone's home. This picture was taken one night while the owners of the shoes were taking part in a Bible study. I took the picture, not because I am a shoe fanatic, but because I personally know each pair of shoes and what brought them to my door.

The small, white tennis shoes belong to a woman who grew up Catholic, but never read the Bible until she came to our Bible study. It is amazing how the Word of God

has opened her heart to a deep understanding of and love for Jesus. A woman fleeing an abusive relationship wears the tall boots. She met Jesus and a group of people who showed her Jesus' love and healing. The brown loafers belong to a man who, at the age of 40, opened a Bible for the first time. With keen intellect and open heart, he met Jesus. And every one of those shoes walked a good distance in the snow in -10° weather to learn about Jesus.

Yes, sometimes shoes are smelly. Some are more fashionable than others. But it is for these shoes we came to Bulgaria. Yet, too few shoes rest outside our front door. Look carefully at the picture. Empty spaces appear where other pairs of shoes should be.

Sacrifice, give, serve, and pray with us that these empty spaces will be filled. Jesus, please send us more shoes! **ONE**

# From ATHEISM to FAITH

By Trif Trifinov

*I was born in Communist Bulgaria in 1969—the year Nixon became President and Neil Armstrong took his first steps on the Moon. Three years later, in 1972, my wife Vanya took her first steps on Planet Earth.*

Back then the world was a different place. Google and Yahoo did not exist. The top-selling movie was *The Godfather*, but the movie was not viewed on DVD



or even VHS. People watched movies in the theater; they did not download them from the Internet. Books were still printed on paper, not viewed on e-readers.

Cinema and books were popular in Bulgaria, but they all served the communist propaganda machine. As early as kindergarten, we were taught there was

no God. As first graders, we joined the children's Communist organization and were indoctrinated to worship the party.

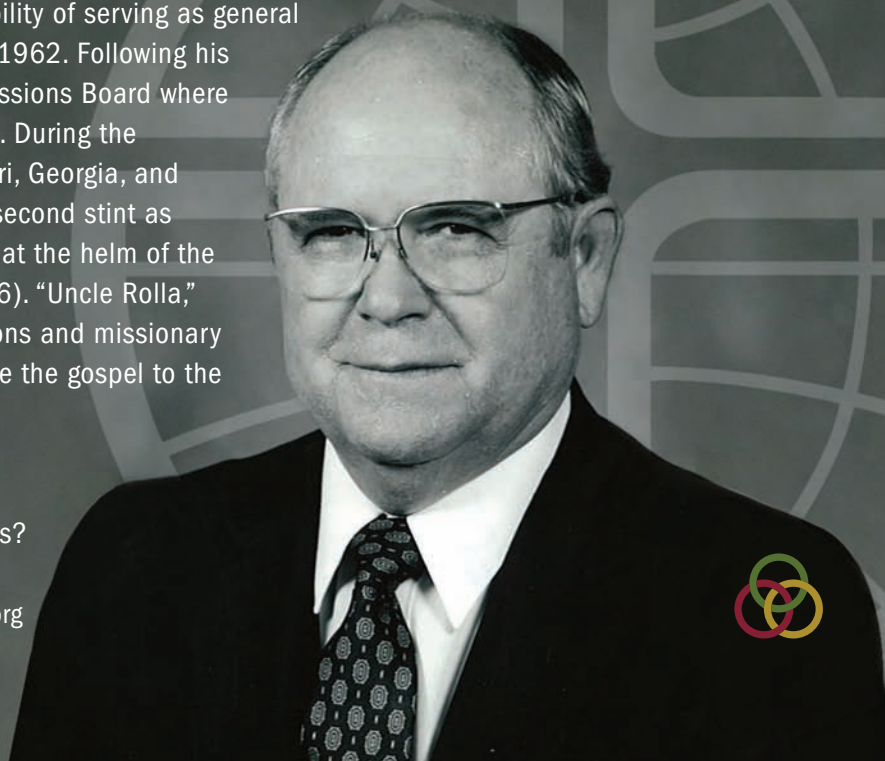
Later, we became activists in the Communist Pioneer and Komsomol youth organizations. We wanted to build Communism and, to the best of our ability, bring the "bright future" closer.

## Legacy of Consistency...

**Reverend Rolla D. Smith** had the unique responsibility of serving as general director of Foreign Missions twice, first from 1959 to 1962. Following his resignation, the Missouri native was elected to the Missions Board where he served faithfully from August 1962 until July 1975. During the intervening years, Smith pastored churches in Missouri, Georgia, and Tennessee. When the board asked him to consider a second stint as general director in 1975, he accepted, and remained at the helm of the foreign missions department for 11 years (1975-1986). "Uncle Rolla," as missionary kids worldwide called him, loved missions and missionary families, and demonstrated a consistent desire to take the gospel to the difficult places throughout the world.

**Why not start your own legacy today,** with an endowment for Free Will Baptist International Missions?

877-336-7575 | [www.fwbgifts.org](http://www.fwbgifts.org) | [foundation@nafwb.org](mailto:foundation@nafwb.org)





*Our prayer is that the New Life Free Will Baptist Church will become a place where atheists, nominal Eastern-Orthodox believers, and people of all other religious backgrounds will find a family, experience God's love, and be transformed by God's truth.*

As we grew older, instead of seeing our dream come true, we realized our country struggled with corruption, mediocrity, and moral degradation. We did not know about the crimes being committed, those being killed, or those sent to more than 40 concentration camps built throughout the country following the Communist coup in 1944.

A few years later, we came face to face with the truth when the Berlin Wall fell and triggered democratic changes in Bulgaria. The idols of Communism started falling, and for the first time we heard God exists! After a 45-year ban on church attendance, thousands flocked to churches.

Around that time, a classmate took Vanya to a large Christian rally, and she accepted Christ as her Lord and Savior. The following year she went to study history at Veliko Turnovo University. I had just arrived on campus to study English Literature and, providentially, God gave me a Christian roommate.

With his help, I started reading the Bible and went to a small Christian student group in the same dorm. A few days later, I knelt to pray and accepted Jesus as my Lord and Savior. My friends took me to church, where I met Vanya for the first time.

During the summer following my first year at university, I participated in a student evangelistic culture exchange project run by American students. I was challenged to commit myself to building an organized student witness in Bulgarian universities. I met Tim Awtrey, and with his help and the help of another missionary from England, founded a student Bible study group—one of the first of the Bulgarian Christian Student Union (BCSU). Vanya joined the group soon afterwards.

After graduating in 1996, we moved to Varna and became the first national staff workers in BCSU. It was an exciting time. Together with Tim and Lydia Awtrey, we were involved in planting student groups, organizing conferences, discipling students, and training leaders in six university centers of Bulgaria. Our three children, Debora (16), Monika (14), and Stefan (11), were born during that time.

**About the Writer:** The Trifinov family has joined the Bulgaria team, working to share the hope of Christ in a country known for hopelessness.

Last year, after 20 years in student ministry, we felt God leading us to leave the BCSU staff and join Tim and Lydia as Free Will Baptist church planters in Varna. We are thrilled to work with people of all ages and testify that God is alive.

We use various evangelistic initiatives to invite people to church: public lectures, Q&A sessions, children's Christmas workshops, seekers groups, and hospitality. I wrote two apologetic books (*What Would Jesus Say to Me?* and *Why I Am Not an Atheist*) that were well received and helped those who read them hear the gospel in a culturally relevant way.

Our prayer is that the New Life Free Will Baptist Church will become a place where atheists, nominal Eastern-Orthodox believers, and people of all other religious backgrounds will find a family, experience God's love, and be transformed by God's truth. **ONE**



# God's Unchanging FAITHFULNESS

By Jonathan Postlewaite

*What do missionaries experience during their first year on the field? The answer is probably different for everyone, but one thing is guaranteed—change.*

Since God opened the door for us to join the ministry in Bulgaria, our family has faced many changes. At the beginning of 2012, we left our church and jobs, traveled to build relationships with supporters, and welcomed a second child into the world. About a year later, we said goodbye to family and friends, boarded a plane, and set out to start a new life as missionaries in Svishtov, Bulgaria.

During our first four months in Svishtov, teammates Tim and Lydia Awtrey steered us through transitions. They secured a language tutor, introduced us to various aspects of Bulgarian culture, and allowed us to get our “feet wet” in the ministry. Then, another significant change took place when the Awtreys departed for their long overdue stateside assignment.

For six months we had the responsibility of overseeing and maintaining several ministries they had started. I preached through a translator almost every week. Though not ideal for the members of New Life Free Will Baptist Church, they were gracious and patient. I also took over Tim’s position as English teacher at a local high school. Amy began leading children’s English club every week. During this time, we continued Bulgarian language studies and shepherded our three-year-old daughter through the adjustment of beginning Bulgarian preschool.

The six months we served alone was undoubtedly a challenging time, but it also gave us incredible opportunities. We saw members of New Life Church step up and take on various ministry responsibilities during the Awtreys’ absence. It has been exciting to see God helping them grow and using them in huge ways—even though many of them have been believers only a short time.

God also used these six months to remind us He is always

with us. He walked us through new challenges and spoke to our fearful hearts in a still, small voice. Over and over, we were reminded His strength is made perfect in our weakness. Even though we felt inadequate and unequipped for this level of ministry only a few months after arriving in Bulgaria, God provided everything needed to sustain the work He had begun. He has faithfully increased our language abilities, helped us build relationships in the community, and touched our hearts in greater ways than we imagined.

We are beginning our second year in Bulgaria with excitement. Excitement the Awtreys are back in Svishtov. Excitement about learning and laboring with our teammates, the Bulgarian church, and the many partners who faithfully support and pray for us. Excitement about seeing God continue to use the New Life Church to make an impact in this town we have grown to love. Excitement about seeing more Bulgarians discover the life-changing hope found only in Jesus Christ.

We are confident, in every change and challenge that lies ahead, God will continue to demonstrate His unchanging faithfulness in our lives and in the work He is doing here. He is faithfully making His name known among those who have never heard. **ONE**



**About the Writers:** Jonathan and Amy Postlewaite were appointed as career missionaries to Bulgaria in December 2010. They recently completed their first year in Bulgaria.



# OUR STORY By Josh Provow

*Lydia first felt God calling her to the mission field at the ripe old age of four. Every night before supper, her family prayed for a missionary from the prayer card “deck.” Even as a four-year-old, Lydia recorded herself presenting the gospel on a cassette tape with the plan to distribute that tape to the uttermost parts of the earth. Being a missionary is in her DNA.*

I wasn't quite so spiritually advanced. I first felt God's call as an 11-year-old at Camp Canaan in Marquand, Missouri. That year we were privileged to hear the testimony of Ginger Harrison, recent missionary appointee to Côte d'Ivoire. God used her story of love and sacrifice to show me He had a place for me “over there.”

Though we came from different parts of the country, the same missionary call brought Lydia and me to Welch College in the fall of 2006, where we met, married, and ministered together for four years. God used our time at Welch to confirm His call and to equip us for the field. God also used this time to add two new additions to our family: Naomi and Phoebe.

In 2010, God led us to Texas to attend seminary and pastor a wonderful church in Weatherford. During this three-year pastorate, our third daughter, Zoe, was born, and we announced the impending arrival of our first son, Malachi. So here we are today, a growing family of six, preparing to pack up and leave our beloved homeland.

On more than one occasion, people have asked if we are crazy to take four young children halfway around the world. The short answer—yes! But let's be honest, have you ever met a missionary that wasn't a little crazy? We are crazy about the Creator who sent His only begotten

Son to die on a tree for His creation. We are crazy about a group of people who may never hear about Jesus unless someone goes and tells them.

## **Why Bulgaria?**

When God wanted Moses to go back to Egypt, He spoke to Him out of a burning bush. When God called Isaiah to be a prophet, He showed him a vision of the Lord sitting on the throne. When God called Paul to go to Macedonia (just a hop, skip, and jump south of Bulgaria), He gave him a vision of a Macedonian man bidding him to come. When God called us to go to Bulgaria, He...well, He didn't do anything like that. God called us to Bulgaria by opening our eyes to the tremendous spiritual need that exists.

We learned Bulgaria is a country of economic depression. The poorest country in the European Union, it has around 15% unemployment and little hope of that changing in the near future.

We learned Bulgaria is a country of emotional despair, with a high suicide rate. Alcoholism is widespread. Many young people think their only hope is to leave Bulgaria.

We also learned Bulgaria is a country of extreme distrust. Under Communism, the government controlled people with fear. School children grew up learning there was no God to love them. In recent



***Bulgaria is a country of emotional despair, with a high suicide rate. Alcoholism is widespread. Many young people think their only hope is to leave Bulgaria.***

years, even though Communism has given way to democracy, rampant corruption has left people disillusioned and distrustful of anyone in authority.

No surprise many Bulgarians feel hopeless! Even though Jesus is the only solution to their problems, few Bulgarians are turning to Him. In fact, among an immigrant population with whom we plan to share the gospel only one person in every 10,000 people know Jesus.

Imagine living in a place where no church member ever knocked on your door. Imagine turning on the radio and never hearing a Christian station. Imagine living your entire life without hearing that Jesus can wash away your sins. For many Bulgarians, this is not imaginary. This is real life.

God used this stark realization to call Lydia and me to Bulgaria. Someone has to go. Someone has to tell them how they can be saved. We believe God is calling us to work alongside the Awtreys, Trifinovs, and Postlewaites. And we could not be more excited. **ONE**

**About the Writer:** Josh and Lydia Provow are living in Missouri and traveling to raise the support needed to head to Bulgaria. Learn more about their family and the ministry they plan at [www.fwbgo.com](http://www.fwbgo.com).





## More About Bulgaria

### People Groups:

32 (9 unreached)

> Bulgarian: 6,268,000

> Turks: 6,000,000

> Gypsy, Bulgarian: 246,000

### Languages

> Bulgarian: 85%

> Turkish: 10%

### Bulgaria's Population: 6,981,642

> Less than 1/2 of 1% Christian

> Bulgaria's suicide rate: 12.3/100,000 people

> Males are three times more likely than females to commit suicide.

> Bulgaria ranked #32 by the World Health Organization for international suicide rates.





# BUILDING PLAYGROUNDS, *Sharing Hope*

By Darren Walker

I made my first trip to Bulgaria in 2008 with a group of men from our church. What stood out to me then, and gave me a burden for Bulgaria, was the lack of hope in the eyes of the people I met. People who believe they have no future and no hope also have no joy. Because of this, I wanted to make an impact on as many people as I could by showing them true joy comes from God. Titus 2:13 reminds us we are “looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ.”

I returned to Bulgaria in 2010 and 2011 with groups from my church. I began developing relationships with the handful of Christians there, and establishing relationships with people I met at the café, stores, and even on the sidewalks.

In 2012, The Hanna Project (THP) approached me about helping lead a team to Svishtov, Bulgaria. They wanted our team to bring “help, hope, and healing” to the people of the city. We completed a major landscaping project at a school for children with disabilities and taught an English class for high school students. As a result, a city worker later asked Jesus into his heart, married a Christian lady, and became a great leader in the Free Will Baptist church. In 2013, THP returned to Svishtov and installed a special needs playground at the same school we visited the year before. However, the highlight of this trip was watching the city worker follow through in his faith with baptism.

During these trips, we have developed relationships with our hotel manager, administrators and teachers at the special



*People who believe they have no future and no hope also have no joy.*



needs school, the mayor of Svishtov, and many other people in the area. Another THP team will travel to Svishtov in June 2014, with the hope of continuing these relationships and seeing God move in the hearts of those we meet. We want to show them there is hope in God, that He gives us joy, and our Protestant church is not a cult but a way for them to hear the gospel of Christ.

Mission work comes in all shapes and forms. God has commanded all of us to

go, but not all of us to preach. We have to find different means to share the gospel, both here and abroad. I want my life to reflect the hope and joy I have in Christ, and this is a method that works for me.

This is why I am involved in short-term missions. I want to make a difference. The Hanna Project is just one way I can accomplish this. **ONE**

**About the Writer:** Darren Walker is associate youth and children's pastor at First Free Will Baptist Church, Washington, North Carolina.

# Around the World >>

## Panama Holds National Convention

**Chame, Panama**—The Panama National Association of Free Will Baptists convened January 10-12, 2014. Lively worship, smiling faces, and vibrant testimonies were among the notable things at this year's convention. During the business session on Saturday, ten organized churches and 19 mission churches were reported. Sunday morning, a variety of classes were offered with an emphasis on missions, youth, children's church, and holiness.

Regional Director Kenneth Eagleton and Director of Field Operations Jeff Turnbough attended, participated in the meetings, and preached.

Steve and Lori Torrison, the only missionaries to Panama present, were honored for their service. The Panamanian association also presented a plaque to the Mission, thanking Free Will Baptists for investing in Panama by sending missionaries to share the Good News.



Kenneth said, "The Panamanian church is making a real effort to bring unity to the work, train future leaders for ministry, and promote church planting at home as well as through cross-cultural missions." ■

## Snapshots Around the World



**Brazil**—Pastor Nilvio Silva of the São José FWB Church in Campinas, Brazil, welcomed 2014 with the baptism of 14 believers during their New Year's Eve service.



**South Korea**—David O. recently spent almost two weeks training pastors in South Korea. Two of his students immediately traveled to Pakistan and taught the same lessons in a Bible institute.



**Brazil**—On December 27, 2013, José Assunção, a recent graduate of Campinas Bible College, was ordained to pastoral ministry. The service was held in his home church, First Free Will Baptist of Araras where Elizeau Cantelmo pastors.



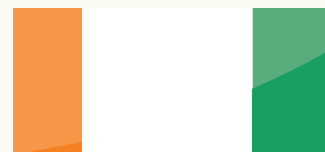
**Japan**—After a knock-on-the-door visit by two Mormon women, a Mormon lady returned to Heath and Joni Hubbards' home to accept the offered "true Scripture" from them.



**Spain**—The Alpedrete congregation celebrated their eighth year of worship services on February 2. As they seek to develop leadership among the believers, the Edgmons and Johnsons are in the process of choosing another pueblo (city) with no Bible-teaching church to begin laying groundwork.



**Japan**—Doug and Miriam Bishop moved to Bihoro mid-February to begin working with Pastor Ishii and the Bihoro Church.



**Côte d'Ivoire**—The two-day funeral services for prominent Christian businessman Samuel Appia featured several sermons aimed at sharing the gospel with unsaved family, tribal members, and friends. Many people heard the gospel.



**Spain**—Missionaries to Spain honored pastors of the Spanish churches for their sacrificial labor in difficult and challenging circumstances with grace and faithfulness. Honored were: Pastor José Manuel and his wife Carmen, and Pastor Jhon Fredy and his wife Lannah.



**India**—Carlisle Hanna returned to India March 5, in time to participate in the national convention of churches in India later in the month. ■



## April Focus on World Missions

**Antioch, Tennessee**—Each April, churches throughout the denomination focus on International Missions and receive a World Missions Offering (WMO) the last Sunday of the month. Over the last two years, the denomination has raised record-setting offerings: over \$1 million in 2012 and more than \$800,000 in 2013.

The remarkable aspect of those phenomenal totals is that fewer than 900 churches contributed to those offerings. Pulling together, these churches accomplished an extraordinary feat, something Free Will Baptists had never done before. Imagine what could be accomplished if all Free Will Baptist churches determined for the month of April to focus on what God is doing through missionaries and national workers around the world. What might happen if every Free Will Baptist church prayed diligently for missionaries throughout the month? What could God do through concentrated prayer efforts for overseas churches, pastors, national leaders, Bible colleges, evangelistic efforts, and so on? What if every church determined to do something for the WMO?

Perhaps more than funding for overseas missions would be raised. Perhaps individuals would recognize God moving in their hearts to witness to their coworkers, neighbors, and friends. Perhaps our churches would be infused with a new sense of purpose. Perhaps churches and individuals would decide the Great Commission is bigger than one offering a year, and decide to make monthly commitments to fund missions. Perhaps God would call more people to labor in the harvest, our colleges would see higher enrollments, both Home and International Missions would struggle to process all the candidates applying for service, and funding would not be an issue.

Let's find out! It is not too late. If you have not signed up to participate in the World Missions Offering, go online today ([www.fwbgo.com/wmo](http://www.fwbgo.com/wmo)), sign up, download resources, and order supplies. Or, call the International Missions office (877-767-7736) and a staff member will help you. ■

## Cuba National Convention

**Cuba**—The National Convention of Free Will Baptists of Cuba met at Cedars of Lebanon Seminary, February 21-23. The convention theme, "Involved in God's Vision for Missions," indicated Cuban Free Will Baptists commitment to fulfilling the Great Commission.

For several years, the convention has sent church planters to other provinces of Cuba. This year, they boldly created an international missions committee. They elected Pastor Miguel Ángel Abdala Romero as the first International Missions director.

Financing is the greatest obstacle the Cuban Church faces in sending missionaries. Pastor Abdala's answer to the financial challenges is tent making—professionals who support themselves overseas through their work.

Although the Cuban Church does not have "official" missionaries overseas, several Cubans (mostly doctors) have worked under government contracts internationally. One Cuban pastor serves as director and teacher at the Chame seminary in Panama. Another is teaching Spanish in China and learning Chinese. Cuban Free Will Baptists are praying the Lord will open doors of opportunity for professionals with missionary training from the seminary to work overseas as bi-vocational, cross-cultural missionaries.

Kenneth Eagleton, missionary to Brazil and regional director for Latin America, preached in the Saturday evening session on "God's Missionary Call for Latin America." ■



Taking the  
Gospel to the

Island of

# ENCHANTMENT

*Free Will Baptists have been burdened for the people of Puerto Rico for decades. Many missionaries have accepted the vision of reaching Puerto Ricans with the gospel. Much prayer, financial support, and time has been spent in efforts to establish a strong and lasting church on this beautiful island paradise.*

BY RICK  
BOWLING

Then, eight years ago, everything changed. We had no missionary to send to Puerto Rico, so the ministry stopped. It looked as though Free Will Baptists had no future on this island that needs the gospel message so badly. Thank the Lord, He had other plans!

A couple in the United States was looking for something to satisfy the longing of their souls. Jose and Suhey Correa found the answer in Jesus Christ and committed their lives to Him. They learned about the Gwen Hendrix Hispanic Free Will Baptist Bible Institute in Inman, South Carolina. In 2009, they decided to go to the institute to learn more about God's Word. After completing the required studies and graduating, God gave them a burden for their home, Puerto Rico.

In 2010, they returned to Puerto Rico to carry on the Free Will Baptist dream of reaching *Las Isla del Encanto*—the Island of Enchantment—for Christ. They have been working hard, and God has blessed. Each Sunday, more than a hundred people attend services. During the week they host Bible studies for men, women, and young people.

Throughout the year they sponsor retreats for all ages. Each week, they venture into shopping centers and parks to share tracts, preach the Word, and build relationships. The future of Free Will Baptists on the island is bright.

The Correas started an academy with eight students this year. They hope to imitate the ministry of Free Will Baptists on St. Croix in the U.S. Virgin Islands, and completely underwrite the expense of their work. Larry Powell, first missionary to Puerto Rico, and recently retired director of Home Missions, believes the Correas will be successful with this strategy.

Ministry on new fields takes time, and we need your help. Pastor Jose and the people of the Puerto Rico church face the expense of ministry in addition to future building projects. I don't want to see this ministry halted by a lack of finances. Maybe God is touching your heart to partner with Pastor Jose and Suhey to help underwrite the cost of building a lasting church in Puerto Rico. Help this dedicated couple build a church in Puerto Rico that will be known for preaching the gospel, winning people to Christ, and building His Kingdom. **ONE**

**About the Writer:** Rick Bowling is director of Hispanic Ministries for Home Missions. Learn more at [www.homemissions.net](http://www.homemissions.net).



*Welch College students reach out to the community in Christian Service.*

# **Beyond** the Comfort Zone

BY STEPHEN  
NELSON



***As I walked into the room,  
I broke into a cold sweat.***

*The air was hot and thick and had a distinctive smell. The room was large, the size of a small auditorium, and more wide than deep, like a large rectangle. We were at the Nashville Rescue Mission to conduct a Wednesday evening worship service. We would lead singing, preach, and pray with those who came forward during the invitation.*

*Moving along the back wall, I felt the weight of many eyes on me. Some turned back to what they were doing, as if our presence was a nuisance. Others held their gaze, and in the brief moment my eyes met theirs, I could see the wear and tear of many difficult years. Others smiled...welcoming, hopeful smiles.*

## ***Student Meets Real World***

*Over the next hour (and next four years), I met many of those men and heard their stories. Some had been through great difficulty brought on by circumstances beyond their control. Others were seeking help to overcome addictions and dealing with results of bad choices.*



I even met one man who had made it his ministry to travel from city to city to witness to people on the streets, in low-income housing projects, and in homeless shelters like the Nashville Rescue Mission. (Believe me, that was a convicting conversation.) All were related in that they had a need, and that need was being met by the tireless, loving work of the Nashville Rescue Mission.

## *Even decisions that seem trivial cost a great deal more than imagined in the long run.*

### **Rescue Mission Lesson**

When I think back on my years at Welch College, the Wednesday night services at “the mission” hold a special place in my heart for several reasons. For one, these times deepened the friendships I was making with other young men at the college. Our weekly visit to the men’s mission built a camaraderie that led to accountability and support, not only on Wednesday nights but throughout the week as well. I also made friends with some of the men at the shelter who, through their own life experiences, offered advice and warnings that carried a great deal of weight coming from those who had learned the hard way.

### **Life Outside the Classroom**

But the greatest takeaway was the chance to serve while putting into practice what I was learning in the classroom and chapel services. These opportunities became vital “spurts” to my spiritual growth. As a registered introvert, I had the uncomfortable privilege of reaching out and

interacting with others I had never met. As a Christian school kid who grew up in the Bible Belt and in church every time the doors were open, I got to spend at least an hour a week in the larger world beyond my comfort zone.

In those moments, I learned vital lessons I could not have fully understood in any other context. I learned I have been blessed far beyond what I had realized to that point in my life. This was never more clear to me than when, as a 20-year-old college student, I met men my age and younger who had no family and nowhere else to go. I also learned that choices have consequences. Even decisions that seem trivial cost a great deal more than imagined in the long run. I learned that appearances can be deceiving, and that God’s love and grace can reach into the hardest and most broken hearts.

### **Wednesday Nights in Nashville**

While my Christian Service stories and experiences may seem unique, they are not so different from those of many other Welch College students who, over the years, have participated in service opportunities provided by the college in partnership with other Nashville agencies and churches.

At Welch College, Christian Service is a weekly requirement. A report is due every week detailing church and Christian Service attendance. But to call it a “requirement” does not do justice to what my Christian Service came to mean to me.

Of course, there were nights I didn’t feel like dressing up and going downtown to the mission. On those Wednesday nights when I had a bad day, homework and tests had piled up, or I hadn’t slept particularly well, it would have been easy to justify staying in my dorm room with the intention of doing better the next week. But it was on those nights that I often received the greatest blessing.

While I was the one going to the mission to minister, I was often the one minis-

tered to by men, young and old, who came from more difficult circumstances than I. Yet, they worshiped with us, listened intently, and responded to the messages brought by student preachers. It was an experience unlike any other for me, and I am forever grateful.

### **Leaving My Comfort Zone**

I am thankful for the ministry of the Nashville Rescue Mission and their willingness to allow us to be a small part of that ministry. I am also thankful to Welch College for providing me the opportunity to serve in a traditionally uncomfortable environment. I am thankful for a school serious about both academics and service.

Christian Service opportunities at Welch College include everything from tutoring to children’s Bible clubs. It includes local church service, overseas mission trips, English conversation partnerships with international students, and much more. Each service provides Welch students the opportunity to meet individual needs while living out their faith and, in the process, sharing it.

I’m no longer a student at Welch College, but I’m still learning. I’m now on staff working in the area of communications, which means I write news releases and edit as needed. I still learn from chapel speakers and from my colleagues at Welch as we serve day by day in the college’s ongoing ministry.

I’m also still thankful for the ministry of Nashville Rescue Mission and the lessons I learned in those Wednesday night services. One of the lessons I try to keep foremost in my heart and mind is that people rarely walk into your comfort zone. You must go to them. Reaching out involves risk and discomfort; but the rewards are great, and the effects, eternal. **ONE**

**About the Writer:** A 2012 graduate of Welch College, Stephen Nelson now serves as editorial assistant on the college staff. Learn more about Welch College at [www.welch.edu](http://www.welch.edu).



# WANTING TO A GAL



**STAR WARS.** Even if you have never seen one of the six movies, I'm sure you have heard about them, with countless commercial spoofs and endless references in other television shows and movies, even cartoons.

Lucasfilm Limited, LLC, now a subsidiary of The Walt Disney Company, changed how we view science fiction and built an "empire" of followers in the process.

These loyal fans have kept the *Star Wars* saga alive.

You find all types in this following, but the ones who really do the most to keep it relevant are often viewed as strange, nerdy, or geeks. They dress up as the characters from the movies, video games, or animated series. They form fan groups like the 501st Legion. They demonstrate their passion for the *Star Wars* saga by building detailed costume replicas of *Star Wars* characters and joining thousands of other fans at conventions (cons) across the nation. Many fans put this nerdy passion to



# WITNESSING A GALAXY FAR AWAY

By John  
Brummitt

good use by raising money for charities or doing volunteer work together.

Often, *Star Wars* fans in the church keep it quiet for fear of what others will think of them. They don't want their fellow church members to find out they like science fiction.

## WELCOME TO THE LEGION

Recently, I joined my brother-in-law Craig Batts, pastor of Nashville's Cross Timbers FWB Church, at the Space City Convention in Houston, Texas. Over the years, Craig and I have been college roommates, co-workers, great friends, and now brothers. Craig is also a *Star Wars* fan—the kind that joins the 501st Legion and goes to conventions. Craig also understands that just because you have a passion for something that is a little strange doesn't mean you are a social outcast.

In fact, the Lord has opened up many doors of opportunity in this community of *Star Wars* fans. A few years ago, Craig met a man named Stephen Stanton, one of the voice actors for *Star Wars: The Clone Wars*, an animated series. He was impressed with Craig, as much for his passion about the gospel as his enjoyment of *Star Wars*. Craig began working with Mr. Stanton as a chaplain and started doing a "Sunday Reflection" post for Mr. Stanton's fan page/group each week.

Fast forward to the Space City Con in Houston, Texas, a "small" convention of roughly 14,000 attendees. (And no, this is

not large in terms of sci-fi cons.) This was my first real experience with *Star Wars*, *Star Trek*, and other science fiction fans on a large-scale setting. Why did I make the trip? Because Craig had the opportunity to hold chapel services with Stanton's group, and the services were on the main schedule of the Space City Con. So, I spent the weekend learning about these legions of fans and their hunger for relationships with people who accept them for themselves.

## A NEW MISSION

I met members of the 501st Legion including Dutch and Kathy, who take care of Craig when he travels to conventions to speak. I learned that a pastor at a science fiction con is a hot topic with people in attendance, even if they look down on Christianity as a whole. I was surprised at the number of people who learned that Craig was a Christian pastor and just wanted to talk.

While the conversations sometimes didn't get much deeper than questions about the chapel service or where he was from, the attendees—even those with hard feelings against the Church—were kind and willing to talk. Saturday was business-as-usual at the convention, but Sunday morning at 8:45 a.m., Craig and I waited outside the doors of Stage A5, ready to welcome anyone who decided to join us for the service. We didn't know if one or a hundred would show up.



Photo (from second left): Craig Batts, Stephen Stanton, and John Brummitt, author.



PHOTO CREDIT: MARK EDWARDS

As a Free Will Baptist pastor's son, I knew how to be a true Free Will Baptist door greeter, so when Craig headed up front to start the service, I stayed near the door to welcome people to the service and answer questions for curious onlookers. They poked their heads into the room to see what was going on and to find out why people were sitting in a room listening to a man talk about Christ. In most cases, when I explained we were having a chapel service, and they were welcome to join, their responses shocked me. "Really? Well, I probably need it anyway."

I was humbled to find that people you probably couldn't drag to a church building were more than willing to attend a chapel service with nothing more than a speaker with a Bible on a stage. No music, no extras—just the message you would hear on any given Sunday at most Free Will Baptist churches across the country. What made the difference? Craig met them where they were and reflected Christ to those sharing his love of *Star Wars* and science fiction.

## BEYOND THE STEREOTYPE

What is the point of this article? To promote *Star Wars* ministry opportunities? No, it is to remind us that God needs us to get out of our box to further His gospel. You may encounter people you think strange or weird, but as Christians we should

view these different communities as mission fields, with people hungry for what we have to offer.

We sometimes get in the mindset that the only mission fields are in foreign countries or remote areas. The truth is, for most of us, our mission fields coincide with the things we are passionate about. Whether it is baseball, football, coin collecting, or *Star Wars*, we need to be open with our faith in order to be used by God to take the gospel to a lost and dying world that desperately needs us to share.

We don't have to be confrontational, just genuinely interested in the people we meet. In today's world, people are looking for ways and places to connect with others...and sadly, a church is not the first place that comes to mind. Rather than sitting back and talking about the "good old days" when people flocked to church, we must meet people where they are—at recreational league baseball, corn hole tournaments, or even a galaxy far, far away...a *Star Wars* convention. You probably won't reach everyone in the world, but reaching the ones with whom you share a common interest is a great place to start. **ONE**

**About the Writer:** John Brummitt graduated in 2011 with an MBA from Tennessee Tech University. A 2004 graduate of Welch College, he has been with the Board of Retirement since the spring of 2006.

# Growing Through **OUTREACH**

By Brad Ransom

**Many ministries in the church are important, but some are essential.** These essential ministries include teaching, assimilation, stewardship, and...outreach. The truth is, many churches do little, if anything, in this crucial area. They focus instead on buildings, staff, and other ministries while outreach is limited to VBS or a fall revival.

The truth is outreach is the only way your church will see sustainable and significant growth. Some church people will have babies, and a few faithful Free Will Baptists will move into your area. But, the only way your church will truly grow is to focus on outreach. Here are a few helpful suggestions regarding outreach in your church.

## **BUDGET**

We spend money on what's important to us. Many churches give money to missions, but aside from that, spend little on outreach. Designate a line in your church budget for outreach so money will be available to spend on events, materials, or some other new initiative to reach new people.

It doesn't have to be a huge amount to begin with. Start small and increase the amount annually. The important thing is to start with *something*. Outreach events cost money, and they will never get done unless you budget money for them.





# Outreach is the only way your church will see sustainable and significant growth.



## PLAN

Plan for outreach like you plan for VBS or a fall revival. Plan for special events targeting new people in your community. These events may include a booth at a community event, a block party, kids' carnival, concerts, literature distribution, water give-a-ways, and more.

## RECRUIT

Enlist the help of volunteers in your church to develop ideas, plan events, and carry them out. Put together a committee or task force to focus on outreach for your church. They will keep the fire burning bright and fresh ideas coming.

## EXPECT RESULTS

Outreach events are designed to draw new people. New people have no connection or loyalty to your church. You have to "wow" them if you want them to come back for a second and third visit. Being friendly isn't always enough. Other churches in your area will also be friendly and welcome visitors. You must go beyond what everyone else is doing.

When you take steps of faith in outreach, expect results and prepare for new people to arrive. Make sure greeters are trained,

the nursery is clean and staffed, your building is presentable, and it looks like you *expect* new people to visit. Publish a flyer explaining Sunday School options. Post signs to clearly direct people to restrooms, children's areas, and the worship center. Nothing makes visitors feel more at ease than easy-to-follow directions.

## FOLLOW UP

Follow-up is a ministry all its own. A good follow-up plan includes visitation, literature, greeters, ushers, welcome center, connection cards, and more. Don't stop with having a good outreach event. Make sure you are ready for visitors when they come to your church...and have a plan for the days following their visit. Define clear steps to bring them back to church, and more important, to bring them face-to-face with the gospel message.

## CONCLUSION

Outreach does not just happen. You must plan and work diligently to make it happen effectively. If you want your church to reach people and grow, outreach must become a priority. Pastors must challenge their people to be involved in all areas of ministry, but none are as important and rewarding as outreach. **ONE**

## Across the Nation >>

### McComas Joins Home Missions Staff



**Antioch, TN**—The Home Missions Department welcomes Rev. Jim McComas to serve as director of church revitalization. Jim was born and raised in Northeast Ohio. He accepted Christ at age six, and surrendered to the call of God on His life to preach the gospel at the early age of nine.

Jim often filled the pulpit of his home church, preached regularly on the radio, weekly in three local nursing homes, and spent a summer on the mission field in France, all before graduating from high school.

Jim served as senior pastor of Canaan FWB Church in Creston, Ohio, for 21 years. He led the church through two building programs and many years of continuous growth. In addition to his preaching and teaching ministry at Canaan, Jim served as vice-chairman of the Board of the Ohio State Association of Free Will Baptists for many years. He continues to write a column on Ohio Free Will Baptist history in *The Ambassador* magazine, and was the baritone singer and songwriter for “The Representatives Quartet” for 25 years.

During his years as pastor at Canaan, Jim was very involved in the community. He taught over 200 junior high students each week during religious education classes in the local public schools and served on the board of directors for the local crisis pregnancy center. A high school basketball announcer, he was known for many years as the “Voice of the Norwayne Bobcats.” In 2012, the Creston Community Club honored him as “Citizen of the Year.” He has also been awarded the “Lifetime Patriot” award from the church and Congressman Jim Renacci for his work in honoring the nation’s veterans. Jim and his wife Beth were married in 1992. They have two boys, Matt and Aaron.

### Associate Missionaries Welcomed



**Home Missions welcomes Jordan and Scarlett Looney as associate missionaries.** They will join Barry Long in Aurora, Colorado, to assist in planting Turning Point FWB Church. The couple is from Carthage FWB Church in Carthage, Tennessee.

Scarlett is granddaughter of Frank Bratcher, a former home missionary who planted the Carthage Church. Jordan has pastored in Tennessee and Arkansas. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Theological Studies and General Christian Ministries from Welch College. Pray for these families as they work together to impact Aurora, Colorado, for the Lord. ■

### Missionary Updates

**Dexter Guin, Colorado Springs, Colorado** - On a recent winter Sunday evening, 16 children were dedicated to the Lord by their parents. They asked the Lord to use these children as He sees fit.

**David Sexton, Suffolk, Virginia** - Since the purchase of a building in 2010, we have progressed through four phases of remodeling and expansion. Over the past five years, 97 people have come to know Christ, 1,448 first-time visitors have come through our doors, and we are averaging 120 in our services. The Lord has been good to us.

**Myron Scott, Gilbert, Arizona** - Over the past five months, seven souls have professed faith in Christ as Savior. We are averaging 116 in attendance on Sundays and in the 90’s on Wednesday nights. We also have welcomed more than 50 first-time visitors.

**Donnie Burke, Castle Rock, Colorado** - Our church celebrated its second anniversary with 128 in attendance. We participated in an area event, and with help from a mission team from Missouri, we made hundreds of contacts for our church. We were able to set up for this annual downtown event in Castle Rock on our own property. ■

## Is YOUR Church Represented?

In an attempt to promote more involvement in business sessions, the National Association of Free Will Baptists voted in 2013 not to charge a \$150 fee for local church delegates. This allows each church in the denomination to send **one voting representative** in addition to ordained ministers and deacons.

Download a Local Church Delegate Card: [www.nafwb.org](http://www.nafwb.org)







# My Name is LEADER

BY SARAH FLETCHER

*Throughout the world, Free Will Baptist women play an integral role in worship, service, and leadership. In both Cuba and Panama, organized national women's networks encourage fellowship and allow women opportunities for growth in each of these areas. Two leaders from these mission fields offer you a glimpse into their lives, their ministry roles, and their passion for the Lord.*

## **MARILYN VELÁSQUEZ**

(pictured top left) of Panama became a believer in Christ at age 22, along with her husband Uriel. The couple began attending the Las Tablas Church at the invitation of a man they met while vending clothes at a sporting event. Marilyn and Uriel kept coming and participated in pre-discipleship classes for nearly three months until one day, during a special service with missionary Steve Lytle, they both went forward and received Christ as Savior. They've been serving the Lord since. Marilyn says, "Knowing Christ has been the very best thing that's happened in our lives."

Although the 30-minute drive to Las Tablas took time away from their business, the couple faithfully attended every service. Uriel first began teaching a class. Later, the church appointed him as deacon and eventually called him as pastor. Sensing God's leading, he sold his business and entered the ministry. Marilyn's role changed from church member to church leader.

During a 15-year pastorate at Las Tablas, and then at Paritas, where they ministered even longer, Marilyn championed women's ministry in her local church and actively involved herself in the *Sociedad de Damas*, Panama's

WNAC's affiliate organization. She has served as national president three times, and has also filled roles as secretary and treasurer. Since 2013, she has worked at the Chame Seminary.

Marilyn and other Panamanian women's leaders emphasize the importance of helping within the local church, whether that help means equipping a church kitchen, visiting the sick, showering new mothers with gifts, or participating in prayer ministry.

Women in Panama do not take prayer lightly. Women's groups in at least two churches fast weekly and pray together every Tuesday morning as people phone



in their requests. Two women from each church comprise a national prayer team. This team maintains a prayer chain, linking women in prayer for specific needs in churches throughout the country. Over the years they have witnessed many miracles through prayer.

As International Missions officially

exits this year, entrusting all Free Will Baptist work into the hands of Panamanians, Marilyn senses that women are ready and willing to take on new roles and responsibilities. One goal they hope to accomplish involves a provision closet of household goods and school supplies for the growing number of Panamanian

missionaries.

She invites women from the U.S. to visit and attend one of their annual retreats. Most of all, as a leader, she desires prayer for unity so the *Sociedad de Damas* can continue to carry out God's work in harmony and with full cooperation from Free Will Baptist women in Panama.

## CIRAIDA SANCHEZ

(pronounced See-DIE-dah; pictured top right) has a rich Free Will Baptist heritage. Her grandparents worked with pioneer missionaries Tom and Mabel Willey in Cuba. Grandparents on both her mother's side and father's side founded churches. Ciraida's father planted a church in Havana. She notes humorously that she was going to church before she was ever born. Ciraida accepted Christ at an early age, and faith kept her from faltering after her father died when she was only 11. Ciraida told the Lord that since he took her father, He would have to be her Father. Since that day, she's wholeheartedly served the Lord.

At age 18, Ciraida married Amato Sanchez, and the two began ministry life together. Three years later, God called them to work in the Free Will Baptist seminary at Pinar del Río, where they remained for ten years. Amato studied at the seminary during those years, but at that time, seminary classes were not open to women.

Ciraida studied theology through another denomination and earned her degree while juggling school and home responsibilities—including the birth of their first child. That's when she became actively involved in the *Departamento de*

*Damas* (Cuba's Free Will Baptist organization for women). She worked in a church near the seminary, holding Bible clubs and discipling new Christians.

Ciraida's ministry experience includes working with young people (teens to young adults), children, and women. Her spiritual gifts involve service. However, in her husband's last year of seminary study, as a pastor's wife in a small church, she had to take on more leadership responsibility—going beyond her ministry areas and out of her comfort zone.

Going above and beyond in ministry is not unusual in this country where women account for 80% of Free Will Baptist church membership. The revolution left men without jobs, sent pastors and many Christian families to the states, and created a void in leadership. Since that time, women have risen to the challenge, pioneering mission works, helping establish congregations, and assisting pastors every way possible.

Ciraida is hopeful a new generation of believers will turn things around. More men are stepping up to the plate, receiving training at the seminary, and participating in a growing *Departamento de Caballos* (Free Will Baptist men's ministry). Their goal is to involve many more men in the work of the Lord.

Until this happens, women continue

to serve in leadership support roles.

Every church has a women's group and all groups network together within the *Departamentos de Damas*. Currently, Ciraida's sister-in-law, Ana Margarita Sanchez, leads the organization. Ciraida serves as national vice-treasurer. Women meet together at least twice a year—in July during the Cuban FWB National Convention and in February at the annual women's meeting.

Last year, the group helped sponsor a couples' retreat and held a women's meeting on the eastern side of the island where Free Will Baptist work continues to expand. Their current project involves securing sewing machines, one for each church. These will enable women to make new clothes or refashion used items and possibly start small businesses as a means for supporting themselves and missionary families.

Ciraida welcomes both prayers and assistance in this and other ministry ventures, specifically putting Spanish devotional books into the hands of Christian women. She requests prayer for Cuba's women who work in everything. "They work with the children; they open new churches, and lead Bible studies in homes," Ciraida acknowledges, then adds, "Pray for me. There's lots of work to do in the church." **ONE**



## WNAC >>

### Women Invited to Join in Corporate Worship

**Antioch, TN**—WNAC invites women to join in corporate prayer for world mission concerns during its annual PreEaster Week of Prayer, April 14-18. This year's observance centers on worship and explores various worship elements and needs throughout the world. A free resource packet is available for any women's group wishing to participate (one per church). Request yours via email: [orders@wnac.org](mailto:orders@wnac.org) or by phone: 877-767-7662.

Worship is also the April focus in *Treasure*, WNAC's quarterly Bible study guide. The April Bible study, "My Name Is Worshiper," examines the life of Mary of Bethany and highlights women's roles in worship on Free Will Baptist mission fields.

Find more information and downloadable PreEaster resources at [www.wnac.org](http://www.wnac.org). ■

### Elizabeth Hodges Achieves CMP Status



**Antioch, TN**—Elizabeth Hodges, executive director of Women Nationally Active for Christ, earned the CMP (Certified Meeting Professional) designation from the Convention Industry Council in November. Only a small percentage of conference planners and industry insiders achieve this honor due to stringent requirements and comprehensive testing.

Free Will Baptists have long been regarded as pioneers in the religious meetings industry. Hodges follows previous convention planners Jack Williams (who not only earned the CMP designation but was among the first recipients), Keith Burden, Melvin Worthington, Dean Jones, Mary Ruth Wisheart, Steve Greenwood, and Ryan Lewis.

"The CMP designation is an important achievement for any planner," Elizabeth said. "Free Will Baptists have developed a strong reputation in the religious meeting industry due to the efforts of my

predecessors, and I wanted to uphold the high standard of excellence they set."

Executive director of WNAC since 2010, Elizabeth plans and manages the program for the organization's annual convention and WNAC retreats, as part of her responsibilities for WNAC.

"Elizabeth got on the fast track to obtaining her CMP designation," said Executive Director Keith Burden. "She worked hard to meet the required criteria and demonstrated her knowledge of the meeting planning industry by passing the exam. It is an honor to work with someone like her who shares our commitment to excellence in this area of ministry."

Elizabeth earned her B.S. from Welch College in 1976, her M.Ed. from Georgia Southern University in 1980, and her Ed.S. from Tennessee State University in 2006. Elizabeth is married to Eddie Hodges, pastor of the Hendersonville FWB Church. She and Eddie have three children and six grandchildren. ■

## Master's Men >>

### Master's Men Announces National Tournaments

**Antioch, TN**—Master's Men recently announced the 21st annual National Golf Challenge to be held August 7 at Windtree Golf Course in Mt. Juliet, Tennessee. The 18-hole, two-man scramble is a fund raising event for the Master's Men Department. Registration is \$70 per golfer and includes green fees, cart fees, two mulligans, practice balls, prizes, door prizes, and a buffet lunch. Play will begin with a shotgun start promptly at 7:30 a.m. Check in will begin at 6:00 a.m.

Hole Sponsorship is available for churches, businesses, Master's Men Chapters, individuals, and organizations starting at \$50. Sponsors will receive a sign at a tee box acknowledging their support. To register, call the Master's Men office at 877-767-8039 or visit [www.fwbmastersmen.org](http://www.fwbmastersmen.org).

Master's Men will also sponsor a National Softball Tournament August 8-9, at Cane Ridge Park in Cane Ridge, Tennessee. The two-day tournament is open to any church affiliated with the National Association of Free Will Baptists or mission churches under the direction of the Home Missions Department.

Enjoy this opportunity to compete against Free Will Baptist teams from across the nation. Played in round-robin format, each team is guaranteed a minimum of five games.

Reserve a spot for your team today. Call 877-767-8039 or visit [www.fwbmastersmen.org](http://www.fwbmastersmen.org). ■

## Leader Profile >>

*Leadership comes in all forms and sizes, but the results are the same. Leaders influence behavior and make a difference in people's lives. Profiling leaders shows a diverse combination of traits, but impacting lives is always a common theme.*

### Donald Myers

**Leadership focuses less on self and more on others.** Donald Myers models a servant style he refers to as *shepherding leadership*. One could argue that Donald does not lead worship but rather leads people in worship. For 18 years, he has served with Pastor Mike Trimble at Kirby Free Will Baptist Church in Flat Rock, Michigan, a suburb of Detroit. While Donald served on the national stage for several years, leading youth and adults in worship at the national convention, his heart for music beats in the local church, where he most desires to serve.

Donald cultivates the people around him into more Christ-like individuals. He humbly acknowledges, "Right from the beginning, over 17 years ago, God surrounded us with talented people. The worship ministry at Kirby has not been master-minded by me."

When asked what he hopes God does with him in the future (other than the obvious), Donald replied, "I don't know how to answer that. I just want to please Him today, and then tomorrow wake up and do it all again to bring God glory."

Born in Kun San, South Korea, Donald had opportunity to visit various parts of the world and the United States before God placed him at Kirby. The adventure continues as he and his wife Amy enjoy kayaking down the Huron River and eating barbeque at the Bootleg or Bone Heads restaurants. He and Amy have two kids—Abigail who they describe as a "mini-Amy" and Austin who is a "mini-Don." As worship pastor, Don balances ministry and family well, and he and Amy love doing life together as best friends.

**Donald, You are a great leader!** **ONE**



#### What is your one indulgence?

Hoffman's Super Sharp Cheddar Cheese

#### What is your biggest failure?

Investing in real estate in 2006

#### What are you reading right now?

*God's Passion for His Glory*  
by John Piper  
*The Real Win* by Colt McCoy  
and Matt Carter

#### What are your top three books (other than the Bible)?

*The Heart of the Artist* by Rory Noland  
*Boundaries* by Henry Cloud and John Townsend  
*Called to Worship* by Vernon Whaley

#### Describe your quiet time.

I love being in God's creation, listening to my iPod, praying, reading, and journaling. As a staff, we read through the *One-Year Bible* each year.

#### Paper or Plastic Questions

*Mountains or Ocean?* Ocean  
*Music or Talk Radio?* Talk Radio (from a worship pastor)  
*Coke or Pepsi?* Coke  
*Facebook, Email, twitter, or texting?* Texting  
*Mac or PC?* PC  
*Socks or house shoes?* Socks



## D6 LAUNCHES A NEW WEBSITE.

### D6FAMILY.COM

- \*Simple resources to help churches and families influence the next generation
- \*Books, Curriculum, and Devotional Magazines for the entire family
- \***Splink** (a free, weekly resource packed with ideas to help parents find teachable moments with their kids.)
- \*Enjoy conversations on family ministry, parenting, marriage, student and children's ministry, young adult life and leadership.

**LEARN MORE ABOUT THE D6 CONFERENCE—A LEADING FAMILY MINISTRY CONVERSATION FOR CHURCH AND HOME**



# At Welch College >>

## Patterson Accepts Teacher Education Position

**Dr. Etta Crittenden Patterson**, adjunct faculty member at Welch College since 2005, has accepted a full-time position in the Teacher Education Department, according to Provost Greg Ketteman.

Dr. Ketteman said, "Dr. Patterson has maintained an excellent Christian testimony as an educator, teaching for many years in local schools followed by a long and successful career in the state department of education in Tennessee. She is a valuable addition to Welch teacher education."

Dr. Patterson grew up in Owasso, Oklahoma, where she graduated from high school and attended First Free Will Baptist Church of Owasso (now Rejoice FWB Church). She received a B.A. from Welch College in 1976 and completed a B.S. in 1980. She went on to earn a M.Ed. from Tennessee State University in 1993 and her Ed.D. from University of Tennessee, Chattanooga in 2013. She brings 30 years of teaching and administrative experience in both Christian and public school settings. She is married to Nashville educator, Dr. Greg Patterson.

President Matt Pinson said, "It's a blessing to have such a stellar educational professional with Christian school and public school experience come to teach at Welch College. Dr. Patterson is excellent at what she does and understands our Christian mission and philosophy of education, and her students love her." ■

## Welch Students Make President's/Provost's Lists

**The fall 2013 semester at Welch College ended with 123 students earning academic recognition, according to Provost Greg Ketteman.**

Twenty-four students made all A's and were placed on the President's List: seven seniors, ten juniors, five sophomores, and two freshmen.

Ninety-nine students earned a B average or higher and were placed on the Provost's list: 19 seniors, 28 juniors, 31 sophomores, and 21 freshmen.

### President's List:

#### "A" Honor Roll

Reese Brown (Jr.) TN  
Derek Cominskie (Jr.) VA  
Jacy Congleton (Jr.) NC  
Charity Dankson (Sr.) TN  
Bethany Douglas (Sr.) TN  
Phillip Easley (Sr.) MO  
Elizabeth Hill (Jr.) VA  
Carl Hopper (So.) TN  
Casey Lewis (Jr.) NC  
Carson Outlaw (Fr.) TN  
Emily Parrish (Jr.) NC  
Caleb Montgomery (Fr.) AL  
Laura Riggs (Jr.) TN  
Kayla Sample (Sr.) IL  
Hope Sisk (Sr.) TN  
Hannah Skaggs (So.) KY  
Candace Smith (Jr.) New Brunswick, Canada  
Larissa Thomas (So.) AR  
Audrey Trotter (Sr.) TN  
Jeannine Tuttobene (So.) TN  
Cherish Tuttonbene (So.) TN  
Reid Wilkerson (Jr.) MS  
Samantha Williams (Sr.) AR  
Zuri Zuniga (Jr.) AR

### Provost's List: "B" Honor Roll

#### SENIORS

Bell, Victoria - NC  
Deel, Austin - TN  
Engel, Kenny - TN  
Ford, Taylor - TN  
Forlines, Joel - TN  
Fry, Katherine - MO  
Horton, Anthony - TN  
Hubbard, Haylee - AR  
Hutchinson, Tim - MI  
Kyberz, Richie - MO  
Lane, Collin - AR  
Manning, Jacob - NC  
Monroe, Jade - TX  
Mouser, Matthew - TN  
Nelson, Melissa - NC  
Pugh, Daniel - TN  
Suarez, Josue - FL  
Truett, Cody - FL  
Whitworth, Emily - TN

#### JUNIORS

Bozeman, Stephen - GA  
Brimer, Nathaniel - VA  
Burns, Rachel - OH  
Dell, David - VA  
Dunbar, Joshua - AR

Fondren, Brooke - MS  
Houske, Russell - TN  
Jackson, Matthew - TN  
Jenkins, Lesley - TN  
Lindgren, Madison - CA  
Lindsay, Deandra - AL  
Lute, Derreck - OH  
Mouser, Amanda - TN  
Nelson, Kelsey - NC  
Newland, John - TN  
Petty, Maria - IL  
Reeves, David - KY  
Riggs, Johanna - TN  
Simmons, Joshua - VA  
Simpson, Keri - VA  
Smith, Wayne - SC  
Snow, Elizabeth - TN  
Stox, Kevin - NC  
Taylor, Sean - VA  
Trimble, Alyssa - CA  
Tucker, Gregory - TN  
Walker, Brittany - FL  
Walters, Dustin - AL

#### SOPHOMORES

Barthelemy, Kaleigh - GA  
Campbell, Anna - TN

Clarke, Staci - OH  
Cyrus, Cole - KY  
Driggers, Hannah - SC  
Driggers, Camille - SC  
Droll, Morgan - IL  
Dunham, Hanna - OH  
Ford, Celeste - TN  
Foust, Corey - TN  
Freeman, Shelby - VA  
Greenwood, Abigail - TN  
Grimsley, Anna - GA  
Hampton, Rachel - TN  
Heeter, Marissa - OH  
Holden, Trevor - AR  
Hollis, Michael - NC  
Melvin, Jessica - TN  
Milling, Caleb - TN  
Morgan, Rebekah - TN  
Nichols, Leslie - TN  
Norris, John - AL  
Pate, Chris - TN  
Pickett, Amy - AR  
Sample, Hunter - IL  
Sexton, Leah - GA  
Showalter, Adison - GA  
Stonerock, Paula - OH  
Thornton, William - TN

Turner, Kelsey - MS  
Vickery, Zachary - AL

#### FRESHMEN

Blades, Autumn - TN  
Blake, Allison - TN  
Carey, Christian - OK  
Chandler, Jordan - TN  
Coleman, Nicholas - AR  
Crawford, Alexander - AR  
Dell, Daniel - VA  
Ferguson, Joslin - TN  
Gedeon, Matthew - TN  
Guzman, Damaris - WV  
James, Megan - TN  
Johnson, Ashton - OK  
Kim, Daeun - TN  
Lancaster, Rennee - TN  
Madden, Dakota - AL  
Parrish, Ellen - NC  
Persinger, Travis - IN  
Romain, Akelam - Virgin Islands  
Saunders, Matthew - TN  
Scott, Benjamin - TN  
Strickland, Lauren - NC

## Welch College Named a “Best Christian Workplace”

Welch College received notification that it has been certified as a 2014 Best Christian Workplace in the United States, according to President Matt Pinson. The college participates in the international survey biennially. The survey has been conducted for the past eight years by Best Christian Workplaces Institute, which has surveyed over 100,000 anonymous employees to date.

President Pinson said, “This is the second time in a row we’ve been named a Best Christian Workplace. What great news for the college family that our employees recognize Welch College as a place where God is honored and workers are respected, and they rate the college as an exceptional place to work.”

In order to be certified as a Best Christian Workplace, organizations must complete the BCWI employee engagement survey and meet predetermined standards of excellence. The survey covers job satisfaction, organizational commitment, Christian witness, super-

visory effectiveness, work satisfaction, personal growth and development, management effectiveness, supporter satisfaction, teamwork, communications, pay and benefits, and more.

BCWI is a research-based organization and human resources consulting firm based in Mercer Island, Washington. Its purpose is to serve faith-based organizations by creating processes of discovery, facilitating organizational effectiveness, and encouraging practices that build healthy workplaces.

“Welch College teachers, staff, and administrators face many challenges in a very difficult economic environment and a culture increasingly hostile to the Christian worldview,” Provost Greg Ketteman said. “Being certified as a Best Christian Workplace demonstrates that Welch employees are responding to difficulty with courage, integrity, diligence, and the assurance of God’s providence. They recognize that in spite of challenges we face, serving the Lord here is a blessing.” ■



### From the Welch College family...

Thank you for making an investment in the college and the future of Free Will Baptists through your generous giving to the Ketteman Student Scholarship Drive.

### Our students (all 337) thank you.



1-888-97-WELCH  
615-844-5000  
welch.edu

Connect With Us  
#WelchCollege





## Intersect >>

### Texts, Apps, and “Glowing Rectangles”

#### Teaching the Bible in a Post-Christian Culture, Part Two

##### TO THIS DAY I CAN SEE HIM.

My grandfather reached his right hand into the back pocket of his best overalls, pulled out his folded Sunday School quarterly, and began teaching—reading, as best he could—the lesson for that Lord’s Day. The setting was the small sanctuary of his country church quartered into “classrooms” by curtains drawn across its length and breadth. His students mirrored their teacher: hard-scrabble farmers, not educated formally, but smart enough to love God, their families, their land, and the Good Book.

For nearly all of us, today’s setting is different. The culture is absolutely not the same, yet the primacy of teaching the Bible endures. How can the Church develop mainstream Bible teaching in this defiant, distracted culture? Seven strategies offer help in this challenge. First, *be a see-through teacher*, as noted in the previous column.

##### 2. Quality control presuppositions.

We’d love to think we come to Scripture totally free of bias, impartial to preconceived ideas contrary to the truth we’re about to teach. Alas, the notion of a “blank slate” is a dream. Not going to happen! We carry baggage. Our culture packs those bags, and we haul them in our minds on our journey through life.

We drink from the fountain of culture. We can’t help but observe life, even our faith, through the lens of what we’ve



learned and experienced. Most of the world’s values, ideas, and beliefs are contrary to God’s Word and seep into our minds. The only question is the degree to which they influence us. We must take intentional steps to redeem our thoughts and guard our affections so biblical thinking shapes us.

First, pray, “Incline my heart to your testimonies” (Psalm 119:36). Ask God to set your mind apart for His glory through His truth (John 17:17). With all your being seek a daily, thought-renewing change that will crowd out the world’s way of thinking (Romans 12:2).

Allow Scripture to demolish entrenched opinions that war against knowing God (2 Corinthians 10:4-5). It may be difficult, but implore the Spirit to bend your thinking to the truth God is teaching through His Word.

Finally, study Scripture humbly in the context of the church. Read the Bible in community—not to let others determine

what you believe, but that together we may challenge our thinking and avoid blind spots that creep in where the culture opposes God.

##### 3. Read the Bible as texts are meant to be read.

Our culture focuses too much on self—what *I* want, what *I* need, how *I* feel—and we try to adjust what the Bible means. Instead of letting the Spirit-inspired writers of Scripture determine meaning, many readers today import their own meaning into its words. The result is “sliding” truth. I may not accept a principle you regard as truth as truth for me. The result is *my word about me* rather than *God’s Word for me*.

I’m not saying most Sunday School teachers and small-group leaders buy into this postmodern way of thinking, but culture does influence us. We must recommit ourselves to reading the Bible

normally—that is, literally unless considering non-literal language. What the author wrote in his time, using normal principles of language in his day, conveys the meaning intended. Our task is to read, interpret, and apply that message to our own day using language our listeners understand.

#### 4. Doctrine is our friend, so teach it.

Today's church suffers from a "theology allergy." Doctrine, many say, is boring, rigid, stifling, and divisive. One youth pastor asked me, "Don't you think we overplay doctrine when we need more practical, real-life teaching?"

We can't escape doctrine, and we shouldn't try. Remember, doctrine is simply teaching. What we teach about the Christian way of thinking and living promotes discipleship and shapes the lives of those we teach.

#### We should ask and discuss questions such as:

- *What is God like? Is He personal? Has He revealed Himself, and if so, how?*
- *What is reality? Is it material? Non-material? Both?*
- *What is the nature of the world around us? Was it designed, or is it random?*
- *What are humans? Do they reflect God's image? Are they basically good? If not, why not?*
- *What happens when we die? Do we cease to exist, or are Heaven and Hell real?*
- *How is it possible to know anything? Through reason only? Senses only? Is there such a thing as revelation from God?*

#### 5. Tackle biblical illiteracy.

"I think that's in Third Peter." I hoped my student was joking when he gave that answer on a quiz. Sadly, he wasn't kidding; he was serious. This incident and others like it remind me that many good,

earnest Christians just don't know what the Bible says.

Don't assume folks know the familiar Bible stories and characters most Christians once knew by heart...let alone the details. As our culture has moved from word-based to image-driven, the importance of textual details has faded. Thus answers like "Joan of Arc was Noah's wife" and "Billy Graham preached the Sermon on the Mount" appear frequently on Bible surveys.

In contrast, we know the particulars about Downton Abbey, the NFL draft, or who won an Oscar. While nothing may be wrong with being "up" on happens around us, shouldn't Christians show the same dedication to immersing ourselves in the absolute truth about life and eternity shared by the God of the universe?

#### Use these starting points:

- *Spend time with who, what, when, where, why, and how of the Bible. It is not superficial to teach Bible facts. Details make all the difference in really grasping a concept. Ask any architect.*
- *Survey the "big picture" of the Bible's message.*
- *Memorize Scripture. Encourage your students to do the same. When you do, words and principles will come to mind to shape your thoughts and actions.*

#### 6. Access what's online, but be sure it is accurate.

Ah, those "glowing rectangles." Whatever you think about screens and their role in our lives, there's no denying they have revolutionized the study and teaching of the Bible. From online sites and software packages to databases and devices to help us access, process, retain, and transmit information, we need to make use of electronic resources and encourage our students to do the same.

#### Remember these cautions and concerns, though:

- *Be careful about accuracy. Go to reputable websites with vetted, authenticated sources. Remember, consensus and relevance do not equal truth.*
- *Surfing the Web can keep you from serious reading. We easily become "scanners" rather than engagers. While deep thinkers post many worthy blogs and articles, others are out-of-balance and inaccurate, posted by critics with axes to grind.*
- *Choose a few excellent resources rather than a host of mediocre ones. Enlist help from others you trust when making your browsing choices.*

#### 7. Apply, Apply...Apply.

Connect the dots. Shop at the "app" store. Answer the most vital question your students are asking—*So what?* Calvin Miller calls application of Scripture "the science of what's happening now."

#### Use these ideas for relevant application:

- *Begin by applying the truth of the Bible to yourself.*
- *Be sure the truth you apply stems from the text of Scripture.*
- *Be immersed in life.*
- *Be involved in knowing and loving your students.*
- *Be specific and systematic in how you apply the Bible.*
- *Be dependent on the Holy Spirit, for His is the ultimate application that will change a life.*
- *Be sure you tell your story of how God's word changed you.*
- *Always leave room for grace to do its work.*

ONE

#### Intersect: where the Bible meets life

is a regular column of ONE Magazine. Dr. Garnett Reid is an Old Testament scholar and long-time college professor. Visit his blog: [www.garnettreid.com](http://www.garnettreid.com).





## Declining the

# DUCK COMMANDER

BY DEREK BELL

**EXCITEMENT!** After months of waiting, we had confirmed a fundraiser beyond anything we had experienced before. Willie Robertson, star of the hit TV show **Duck Dynasty** had accepted our offer to come to East Tennessee to speak on behalf of Free Will Baptist Family Ministries. We had secured a 5,200-seat arena and tickets were being sold. We were confident that we were on the way to raising nearly \$100,000.

Then, in the middle of all the excitement, my dreams came splashing down around me. The Robertson family business, Duck Commander, Inc, made a business decision to partner with a wine company to market Duck Commander Wines. It was the moment every development person (fundraiser) prays will never happen.

A decision had to be made, and the questions and rationalizations began to circle in my head: “What should we do? Just ignore it? Pretend we never saw it?” “It’s not like they broke any commandments, right? They are still Christians.” “What will the people who bought tickets think of us?”

I wish I could tell you that I have achieved “Super Christian” status, that these questions were no struggle for me, that I boldly stuck out my chin and proclaimed my unwavering stance on truth and righteousness with a Bible tucked firmly under my arm. But the truth is, I wrestled with these questions and many others as I prepared to make my decision.

In the end, this was something I could not shake. You see, at FWB Family Ministries, roughly half of the young people we serve on our campus in Greeneville, Tennessee, are sent to us by the court system to go through a drug and alcohol program. How could we teach abstinence from alcohol and sponsor a fundraiser

featuring someone selling wine?

Christians already have the hypocrite label as it is. Why would I want to pour fuel on that fire? I could hear the accusations of detractors wanting to tear down the church. “You preach one thing but do the opposite” or “You are just in it for the money.”

Our country and children need the Church to be consistent in its message. Sometimes, the right message isn’t the most popular message. In a society that claims truth is relative to circumstance, the Church should always stand on biblical principle and stop apologizing for it.

When we made the decision to cancel the fundraiser, the news went viral. I re-

ceived requests to do interviews with Fox News, radio stations around the country, local television and radio stations...even a little homeschooled girl did a report on the subject. Most interviews wanted to

*We don't have to be offensive to people, but we must take the offensive against sin.*

pit FWB Family Ministries against the Robertson family. I told them we have no issue with the Robertson family. They have the right to make whatever business decisions they want. And when told that we were going to cancel the event, Willie Robertson understood the deci-

sion, and he didn't have an issue with Family Ministries. Personally, I appreciated his understanding.

But we experienced something truly disappointing. It wasn't the world that ripped our decision apart on social media; it was those claiming to be Christians! Now, I know "Christian" is a broad term today, but I couldn't help but think, "No wonder the church has lost its power!"

No wonder the church has little influence on public opinion. God's people lack the backbone to make a stand. If the comments I read on social media threads are representative of today's church, it's not surprising that the morals of our society have degraded to the lowest point in our nation's history.

We don't need revival. We need Romans 12:2 to wash over the church. Complete transformation is our only hope. It is sad to see Christians sit on the sidelines cheering half-heartedly

for those "in the game." Yet, those same Christians sometimes feel it their right to criticize and second-guess every decision when the pressure is on.

Please understand. I don't advocate using the Bible as a weapon against the lost. I used to have that attitude toward the unsaved, but the Lord has convicted me and delivered me from it. But it is possible to remain compassionate toward a lost world while standing firm on biblical principles. We don't have to be offensive to people, but we must take the offensive against sin. Pastor, lead by example, and congregation, stand with your pastor! Let's work together in this inconsistent world to be constant—rooted and founded in the principles of the never-changing Word of God. **ONE**

**About the Writer:** Derek Bell is director of development at Free Will Baptist Family Ministries. Learn more at [www.fwbfm.com](http://www.fwbfm.com).

## Why is everyone so excited?

**Over 60 churches and 250 families** have taken advantage of the partnership between **Cornerstone Estate Planning** and the **Free Will Baptist Foundation** to prepare their estates in such a way that they will benefit their children and the ministries they love. They will avoid the red tape and frustrations of probate, and many families plan ahead to leave gifts to church or ministry. **Shouldn't your family be next?** Contact the Foundation and Cornerstone today:



**Free Will Baptist Foundation**  
[www.fwbgifts.org](http://www.fwbgifts.org) | 877-336-7575  
 (now on Facebook)





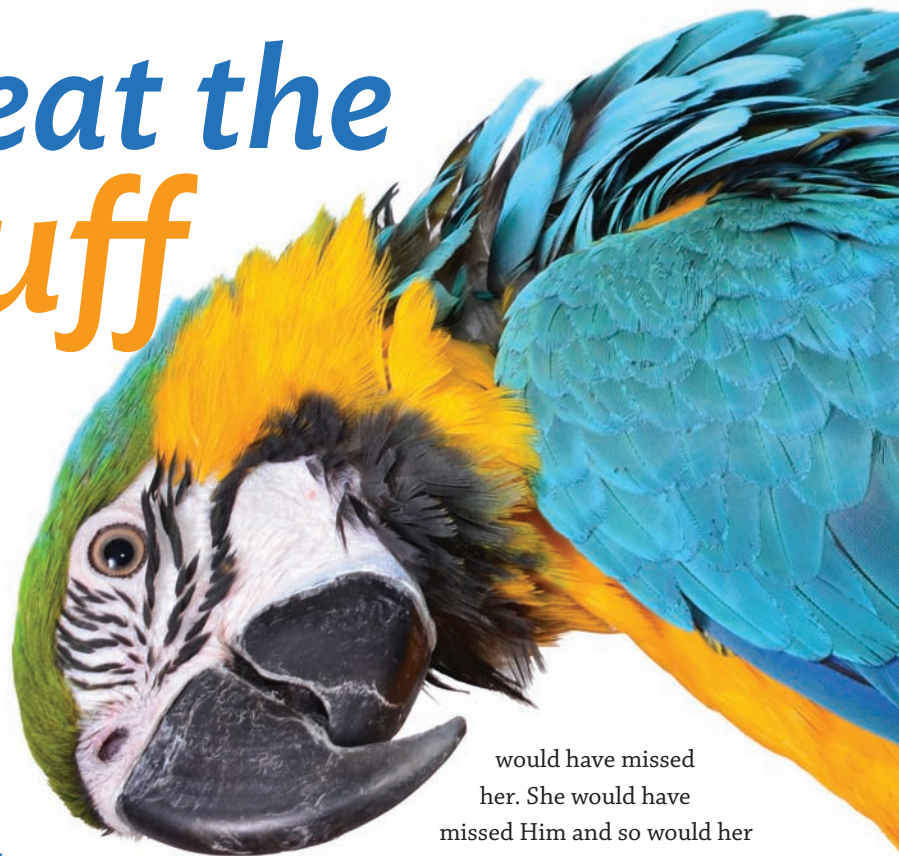
# How to Sweat the Small Stuff

BY BRENDA EVANS

*If buying a room-sized birdcage means you have to buy the parrot that goes with it, think twice. Parrots can live to be 100. Besides, parrot owners tell me you also must buy super-sized, sound-deafening earmuffs. Parrots know how to scream loud. Note I said scream, not chirp, whistle, or coo. Ear-splitting, glass-breaking, hear-it-a-mile-away loud. I'm quoting parrot owners on that. You also may have neighbors who do not own big earmuffs, may get angry, may even shoot. You should know, too, that some parrots are both screamers and biters. Are you prepared for that?*

But this is not really about parrots. I'm making a point. If you sweat the small stuff like you ought to, later you probably will not have to sweat the big, really bad stuff. That goes for all sorts of things both spiritual and material.

Take Jesus at the Samaritan well, for example. It was noon—a small thing, but not an insignificant thing. An adulterous woman gave Him a sip. He gave her more, a whole artesian well of living water. What if He had arrived earlier in the day? He



would have missed her. She would have missed Him and so would her Samaritan friends. All would have remained lost and thirsty and perhaps never have found the Water of Life. Small things matter.

Materially, too, many things turn on small wheels. Take real estate contingencies. Some are trivial; some are not. Imagine you want to buy a house on the edge of town. Your agent finds exactly what you want, but there is a contingency on the contract. If you buy the house, you have to take the three llamas that go with it. The upside is there's no extra charge for the llamas. The downside is you know nothing about llamas. So you think at least three times about this contingency, and you do research. You learn that llamas are a South American camel. They live 20-30 years, are intelligent and sociable, willing to be pack animals and, best of all, if all your good intentions toward them fail, they are edible. So you sign the contract.

Contingencies in real estate purchases range from minor to deal-breaking. I re-

member a minor one: the water feature on the second-story deck of a house we were negotiating for in Nashville years ago. That gurgling, water-spitting frog almost did the deal in. It was ugly, and it took up precious space. We didn't want it. The owner insisted we did. Bill and I insisted we did not. Eventually we were able to sweat that water-spitting frog off the deck, so we signed the contract.

Of course, there can be serious issues. "As is" on real estate contracts in earlier days often meant you got the house all right, but also the termites, the black mold, and the backed-up sewer. Today, most states require inspections and forbid "as is" home sales. In short, you must protect yourself and look closely at the small stuff. What if there are still issues? Ask for a contingency of your own: the seller must fund a 12-month warranty.

In fact, look closely at any contract. Last year we bought a "new" used car. New to us, but three years used to everybody else. It was a snazzy 2010 mocha-colored Buick LaCrosse with bucket seats, black leather interior, stick shift (never mind that it's a three-in-the-floor automatic), tilting seats and mirrors... the works. A real step up for retirees who owned The Old Man's Car, a white Buick LeSabre, for ten years and 186,000 miles. The point is, much to the annoyance of the car salesman, I read the entire contract—large print, small print, the whole thing. Four pages as I remember. All the small stuff! Bill, too.

You have to pay attention unless you like bad surprises. Know what you are doing, what you are buying, what the terms are. Don't get caught with three llamas you didn't want and didn't even know you had paid for.

I'll go further. Another way to sweat

the small stuff is to be downright suspicious. Now, I don't mean paranoid or irrational. In fact, I mean just the opposite. As a consumer, keep your eyes wide open. Be mentally alert. Watch, listen, question, doubt.

Do you know what the word *consumer* suggests about us? It's not entirely positive because the verb form means,

***If you sweat the small stuff like you ought to, later you probably will not have to sweat the big, really bad stuff.***

among other things, that we can become engrossed, take up things, devour them, even gorge ourselves without thinking. If we sweat the small stuff—stop, question, compare, restrain our impulses—we probably will not wolf down every so-called "great deal" in sight or polish off ten sales racks like a ravenous glutton.

Here's another thing: admit that not every great deal is really a great deal. Last fall, before the holiday shopping frenzy began, I read a lot about buyers and sellers, including new terms like retail theater, framing, and engineered illusion. I also brushed up on old terms such as list price, markdowns, and profit margins.

Retail theater and engineered illusion especially grabbed my attention because I love drama. Theater is exciting with its

tricks of light and sound, ironic turns of words and plots. I like smoke and mirrors, too, even when I know the truth is being embellished. At the theater, I want to be deceived and transported for the moment. I want pleasure and pathos. I want to feel.

We shoppers don't seem to mind retail theater either because we also like to feel. We want "bargains" even if we suspect they are carefully engineered illusions. Suzanne Kapner who writes for *The Wall Street Journal* says what we are after is the feeling that we got a good deal. We want elation, exhilaration.

Truth is, we know that markdowns have first been marked up and that steep discounts are already priced into the product. Kapner reminds us of the usual way this is done: "Big retailers work backward with their suppliers to set starting prices that, after the markdowns, will yield the profit margins they want." Only a few of us buy at that starting price. Most of us wait until prices are marked down once, then again. That's when we get that I'm-getting-a-bargain feeling, and retailers still get their really healthy profit margin.

So what's my point? There are a couple, actually. One, I must take care of small things both materially and spiritually so that they don't become big bad things. Two, that when I go feeling my way along or when I'm heedless or indulgent or too passive, I probably won't take care of those small things. That goes for everything from how I shop the sales racks to how I witness for Jesus.

Speaking of Jesus, remember what He paid attention to that day in Samaria? Small, but not insignificant things: time, place, purpose. He's our model. Small stuff matters. Let's sweat it. **ONE**





# ADAPTING

*to the Plan of God*

By Norma  
Jackson Goldman

**HAVING JUST COME THROUGH A MAJOR MOVE,** I've had a multitude of opportunities to evaluate just how well I adapt to new circumstances and situations. The jury is still out, but my track record thus far is unimpressive.



## Life thrusts many *unexpected changes* upon us...

On a practical level, adapting to changes in daily routine has been enormous. Where to have my quiet time...what chair, what room, and where will I find the fewest distractions? The kitchen is much different, making things hard to find, and performing the smallest task takes a lot more time. Where did I put the napkins, the baking powder, and my favorite paring knife?

My son-in-law has been gracious to help with repairs, installation of appliances, moving furniture each time I change my mind about just the right location. I've resolved to prepare his favorite foods to reward his work. My first effort was a fresh coconut pie, but where was the rolling pin? After searching every cabinet and drawer, in exasperation I covered a tall, slender can of cleaning liquid with foil, and finished the piecrust wonderfully with my makeshift rolling pin!

Other aspects of adaptability have proven even more daunting. There is a vast difference in the worship style of the new church I'm attending and my former church. Preparing one's heart to hear the Word is essential even if the music is new, the words unfamiliar, and the warmth that comes from accustomed surroundings is missing. Having taught Sunday School for decades, it seems strange to sit and simply listen. After services I experience a vague sense of being a bystander, rather than an

integral part of the life of this wonderful new church. Where is my place? What is my role? What is God calling me to do? These questions can only be answered through obedience, prayer, and faithfulness to accomplish what is set before me.

Just this week, Scripture has taken me into the life of Abraham—called away from everything familiar to a new country, a new lifestyle, away from family and friends. His calling was simply to go and trust God for His will to be revealed at each juncture of the journey. In each new circumstance, Abram's faith and trust in God grew, and God "accounted it to him for righteousness" (Genesis 15:6). This profound truth is repeated in Romans 4:3, "Abraham believed God and it was accounted to him for righteousness."

Abraham's testimony is this: God called him to a new place; he responded in obedience. He continued to practice spiritual disciplines, offered sacrifices, and established altars in each new place he lived. He tithed to Melchizedek after God helped him recover his nephew Lot and his belongings. He taught his children obedience to God, even to the point of being willing to sacrifice his promised son Isaac. He lived a godly life, treating others with kindness and respect.

Abraham was not perfect, as Scripture clearly attests, but He believed God, obeyed God, and followed His direction. I suspect I was not drawn to this passage by accident. In new circumstances and new situations, I can respond like Abraham. So can you.

Life thrusts many unexpected changes upon us. We move from good health to bad, comfortable finances to strained resources, or highly productive environments to a constant struggle. But in each circumstance we have the choice and opportunity to be obedient, to trust God, and to live out each day in way that gives clear testimony to our faith in Him. **ONE**

**About the Writer:** Former magazine editor Norma J. Goldman enjoys a successful freelance career in her retirement. The award-winning writer lives near Houston, Texas. Learn more about retirement options at [www.boardofretirement.com](http://www.boardofretirement.com).

# Thank You

First FWB Church, Mountain Grove, Missouri; Board of Retirement in memory of Jim Lowe and Bill Barber; Rev. and Mrs. Ray Lewis in memory of Jim Lowe and Bill Barber for the donation to the Labor of Love Campaign. Learn more at [www.boardofretirement.com](http://www.boardofretirement.com).



# Is an Annuity Right for You?

BY D. RAY LEWIS

As director of the Free Will Baptist Board of Retirement, one of my responsibilities is to attend several state association meetings each year. As I look around during these meetings, they all have one thing in common—a lot of gray hair in the audience.

Senior citizens have become the largest and fastest-growing segment of the American population. According to the 2010 census, for the first time in history the number of people in the U.S. over age 65 grew faster than the country's total population during the preceding decade. The number of people in this age bracket increased by more than 15% during that period. Within the over-65 population, the fastest growing age segment is the 85-and-over age group. Believe it or not, some of them are Free Will Baptists.

These figures confirm that people are living longer, which means they will need income for a longer period of time. The problem is that many of them are outliving their money because they never anticipated living so long and did not make proper preparation.

If we want to maintain our present lifestyle throughout retirement, it is imperative to plan ahead. It won't just happen. Even the person who says, "I don't ever plan to retire; I'm going to work until I die," needs to prepare. None of us know what the future holds. We may be physically unable to continue working until our final breath, but even if you succeed at working until the end of your life, what about your spouse? Can she make it financially if you haven't made proper preparation? Isn't it better to prepare and not need it than to reach that point in your life and have nothing?

One of the safest ways to prevent outliving your money is to choose an annuity as the source of income in retirement. Annuities are designed to provide a steady income for life. Annuities fall into one of two classes, fixed or variable. The annuities offered by the Board of Retirement are fixed annuities. They provide income for life with a guaranteed rate of interest.

Variable annuities are exactly what their name implies. The funds are invested, and the value of the account is determined

None of us know what the future holds.



by the performance of those investments. With this type of annuity, your monthly benefit varies.

The Board of Retirement offers both single life and joint life fixed annuities. Since providing a steady source of income is the primary purpose of an annuity, we offer three options with each annuity choice.

**Single Life Annuity.** The simplest form of annuity, a single life annuity guarantees income during the lifetime of the participant only, with no survivor benefit after the participant's death (no matter when death occurs). Keep in mind, however, that the participant will never outlive his money with a single life annuity.

**Joint Life Annuity.** Like the single life annuity, the participant will never outlive his money. The difference between the single life and joint life annuity options is that the beneficiary also continues to receive benefits for the rest of his or her life. It doesn't matter how long or how short that life span may be, the benefits will continue as long as either one is alive. However, no benefits will continue beyond the death of the participant and beneficiary.

Both the single life and the joint life annuity offer the option of income for life with two different guaranteed benefit periods. Upon selecting the annuity option, the participant can choose a

10 or 15-year guaranteed period.

With the single life annuity, the participant will receive an income for life, no matter how long or short that life may be. If he dies before the guaranteed period is completed, the beneficiary will continue to receive the monthly benefit to finish out the period. If the participant survives the stated term, he or she will continue to receive an income for the rest of their life.

The joint life annuity with a 10 or 15-year guaranteed period is also available and works similar to the single life with guaranteed period. The participant and beneficiary will receive an income for life, no matter how long or short it may be. If both the participant and beneficiary die before the guaranteed period is up, the contingent beneficiary continues receiving the monthly benefit to finish out the guaranteed period. Remember, if the participant or the beneficiary (or both) survives the stated term, he or she will continue to receive an income for the rest of his or her life.

People enter retirement with different hopes, plans, and dreams. To some, it is the end of a journey; to others, the beginning of a new and exciting chapter. It can be the most enjoyable and productive time of our lives...if we prepare ahead of time. Contact our office for more information. ☐

**About the Writer:** D. Ray Lewis joined the Board of Retirement in 1982. He became director in 2005 after serving for several years as assistant director. Visit [www.boardofretirement.com](http://www.boardofretirement.com).

# Low interest rates giving you indigestion?



**Fizz, Fizz, what a relief it is!  
Get 2.75% interest on Money  
Management Trusts with Free  
Will Baptist Foundation!**

foundation@nafwb.org | [www.fwbgifts.org](http://www.fwbgifts.org) | 877-336-7575



# Brown on Green >>

## Weathering the Storm

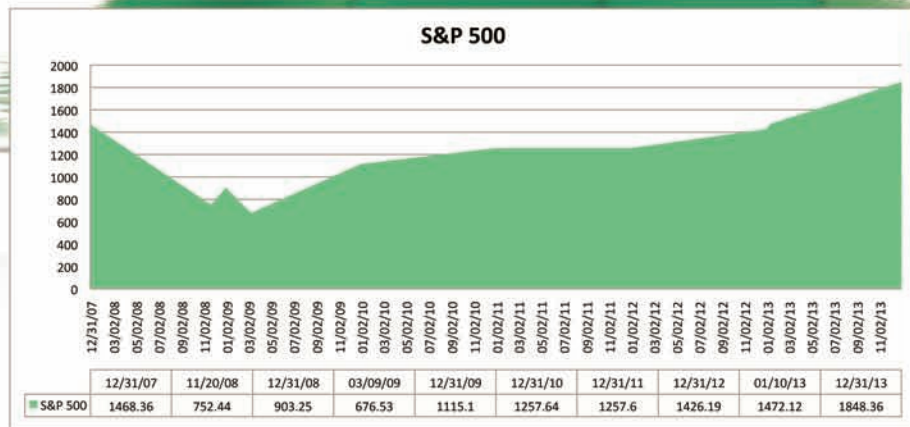
Much debate has taken place throughout the years over how to invest when the stock market is extremely volatile. The stock market works the same as any market. The law of supply and demand drives the price. Selling stocks in low demand drives down the price while stocks in high demand force the price up, enticing stockholders to sell. Collapses happen when the market has too many sellers and not enough buyers. It rallies when the market has too many buyers and not enough sellers

We all like to think we are rational people who do not make emotional decisions, but the majority of us make decisions based on emotions. These emotional choices are also true of those making decisions about buying or selling stocks. When a panic starts in the stock market, the majority wants out all-at-once, and prices are driven lower. The reverse is true as well. When the majority thinks every stock is a good buy, the market is driven higher. In both cases, from a logical standpoint, the market goes lower or higher than it should.

During the meltdown in March of 2009, we saw the stock values of many companies dip below their cash-on-hand. In other words, their stock prices were so low, the company could have used its own cash to buy the stock and become privately held.

Some believe you should “time the market” by selling when the market peaks, staying on the sideline until the market hits rock bottom, and then jumping back into the market at its lowest point. Simply put: sell high and buy low.

The problem with this method is that no one can accurately predict the future of the market. Many who attempt the sell



high/buy low strategy sell too early. They miss the peak of the market and find themselves on the sidelines as the market rises another 10%. They often miss on the other end as well, and do not get in on the lowest prices, therefore missing the first 10% of a rally.

A diversified portfolio of stocks held through the fluctuations of the market has proven to be the best strategy to follow. Many long-term studies indicate that “market timers” do not do better than those who buy and hold.

We have experienced much market volatility since the end of 2007, with the S & P 500 falling to a low of 676.53 on March 9, 2009. As this article is being written, however, the S & P is at 1,831.40 for a long-term gain of over 170%. Refer to the information graphic above for highlights of the recent “Great Recession” period. The stock market storms can rage at times, but if you just hang on and weather the storm, you will come out better than by trying to time the market. **ONE**

**About the Writer:** David Brown, CPA, became director of the Free Will Baptist Foundation in 2007. Send your questions to David at [david@nafwb.org](mailto:david@nafwb.org). To learn how the Foundation can help you become a more effective giver, call 877-336-7575.





THE  
**HIGH**  
COST of  
**CUTTING** CURRICULUM

By David Womack

***If you could put a dollar value on Christian education and discipleship, what would it be?*** You may immediately think one can't put a value on that which is priceless. However, in reality, we put a dollar value on Christian education every time we order, by what we order, and if we don't order at all. We would all agree that ongoing Christian education and discipleship of family and church is worth any amount. That's a given. But as I examine the data at my disposal, the investment is shrinking for many churches. ►



As director of customer service and sales at Randall House, part of my responsibility is to analyze data on sales and trends in Christian resources, especially curriculum. Most mainstream, evangelical publishing houses (dwindling in number) regularly report declines in overall sales. Most denominational publishing houses that still produce curriculum (even fewer) report a decline as well. Several underlying issues are involved in this, none of which reflect a positive trend in Christian education and discipleship.

Two areas where costly cut-backs are often made are student resources and children resources. Two other areas of concern and consequence are the use of non-curricular and non-traditional resources, and non-denominational and non-Free Will Baptist resources.

### Student Resources

Most churches generously invest in resources for the teacher, but this is only one side of the equation. Student resources (D6 devotional magazines) are not just add-on extras, they are central to the curriculum. D6 curriculum is intentionally designed to coordinate the efforts of the church *and* the home with resources for the teacher and the student. Each student should have his or her own age-appropriate devotional magazine to reinforce the Scripture and theme introduced by the teacher and to guide into deeper application of biblical truth. If the student's resources are not provided, the effectiveness of the class is severely diminished.

Student resources are really home resources—tools to promote Christian education and discipleship at home. D6 curriculum incorporates several important tools to equip parents to engage in spiritual conversations at home. The student resources, or devotional magazines, are the key component.

The business term ROI (Return On Investment) applies here. Sometimes, the devotional magazines are considered non-essential items and therefore an area for potential budgetary cuts. When we evaluate the potential return on investment with devotional magazines, the savings are not worth the cost of what is lost. Another way to put it: "Is it worth investing in the homes and families of my church?"

### Children's Resources

I have heard it stated that Free Will Baptists are an aging denomination. While that observation may be true, it doesn't mean we are a dying denomination. Many of our churches are small, struggling, and have more older adults than children. If that is reflective of your geographical demographic, it isn't a negative thing, it's just the facts of where you are.

I am a firm believer that churches should minister to everyone in their congregations, but I also believe we need to identify

target areas for special investment. If my church had 30 older adults and only five children, I would not neglect the 30, but I would certainly identify the five as the target and intentionally focus on how to invest in their discipleship. If there are only three or four children in your church family, aren't they worth the investment? Even if they only come to class twice a month, shouldn't you do all you can to invest in their Christian education and discipleship? The cost of curriculum is really a non-issue when you look at the bigger picture of service for the kingdom. Saving a few dollars per quarter isn't worth the cost of being ill-prepared to minister when opportunity comes.

Another point to consider is that "older generation" is usually synonymous with grandparents. Grandchildren are a mission field, even if they aren't yours or don't attend your church.


### Non-Traditional and Non-Curricular Resources

The primary benefits of a curriculum are a systematic approach to exploring the story of the Bible and the depth and breadth in content. The best way to leverage these benefits is to invest in a curriculum that has a comprehensive scope and sequence and age-appropriate content. *Scope and sequence* simply refers to the map showing what a curriculum covers and the schedule it follows.

D6 curriculum follows a six-year scope and sequence, and each cycle provides new content, in a curriculum that encourages and equips for Christian education and discipleship through every age and season of life. Short-term Bible studies can be rich in content but always leave us to figure out what's next. These are great supplements to our Christian growth and have their place in our arsenal of resources, but not as the core.

**Be careful when you "trim the fat" not to cut so deeply you lose the "meat."**

Christian education and discipleship is an ongoing process that requires ongoing investment and *systematic* support (emphasis on systematic). Teachers and classes that just "do their own thing," or jump from one short-term study to another, do not have a framework of systematic support. There is value in discussing the Bible a chapter a week or using other Bible studies, but they do not provide the benefits of an ongoing curriculum, and, in themselves, can lead to weak biblical literacy. The Bible admonishes us to study the whole counsel of God, not piece-meal lessons from week to week. The backbone of your church's Christian education and discipleship is not the place to cut back or improvise.



When we evaluate the potential return on investment with devotional magazines, the savings are not worth the cost of what is lost.

### **Non-Denominational and Non-Free Will Baptist Resources**

Another area of concern, similar to the issue above, is the use of curriculum published outside of Free Will Baptists. As already stated, Christian education and discipleship should be guided by a comprehensive, systematic curriculum that supports every age group. Such a curriculum influences biblical literacy and develops worldview.

These are matters of doctrine. Should we trust these foundational teachings to a publisher that does not share our interpretation of Scripture? While I would never encourage Free Will Baptists to be submerged exclusively in our own movement, the core of our Christian education and discipleship should be rooted firmly in our own *Articles of Faith*. Sure, we can learn from the larger body of evangelical Christendom, and we should read and study broadly (look at any pastor's library), but the core of our Christian education and discipleship should be rooted in Free Will Baptist doctrine.

You may find "less-expensive" curriculum options, but when we cut back on our own curriculum and invest in other curricu-

lum, it carries consequences for multiple generations. Using D6 curriculum is an investment in perpetuating the faith of Free Will Baptists. For quality and content, D6 curriculum is a great investment.

The ongoing Christian education and discipleship efforts of the local church are absolutely worth the investment. Curriculum should be one of the areas we guard from budget cuts. Having served many years as a pastor, I am well aware that one of the first places scrutinized for budget cuts is the curriculum line item.

I will be the first to encourage churches and leaders to monitor what you use and adjust your orders accordingly. That's just good stewardship. I do caution you to be careful when you "trim the fat" not to cut so deeply you lose the "meat." It is always wise to be prepared for guests and growth. Consider other line item cuts with less significance, like the plates, cups, and coffee fund. **ONE**

**About the Writer:** David Womack was ordained as a Free Will Baptist minister in 1987 and has served churches in Florida, Alabama, Georgia, and Illinois. He joined the Randall House team in August 2010, where he serves as director of customer service and sales. David and his wife Teresa live in Hendersonville, Tennessee.



# FURY

## Mixed With Grief

*A Free Will Baptist chaplain shares his ongoing struggle with PTSD.*

BY MARTIN KUZ

*The following article appeared recently in the military newspaper **Stars and Stripes**. It features the story of Free Will Baptist Chaplain (MAJ) David Trogdon, while serving in Afghanistan. With an acknowledgement to **Stars and Stripes** and the permission of Trogdon, we would like to make this article available for our readers. The military chaplaincy plays an important part of the ministry of Home Missions.*



**The soldier lay on a stretcher, his lower legs a mash of pulverized bone and blackened flesh.** Under the bright lights of the medical tent, doctors and technicians surrounded his broken body. Major David Trogdon stood back a few feet, watching in silence. When he saw an opening, the chaplain came forward and squeezed the soldier's hands in his own.

Alert and lucid, the soldier spoke in a low voice punctuated by sharp breaths. He had stepped on an improvised explosive device (IED) while on patrol with his platoon. He realized the severity of his condition and requested prayer. Trogdon bowed his head and implored God to relieve the young man's suffering and grant him strength in his recovery. A short time later, the soldier flew from the base in Logar to Bagram Air Field, and from there he traveled to Germany and the United States. He lost both legs below the knee.

"It's almost like having my kid in there," said Trogdon, chaplain of the 3rd Infantry Division's 4th Brigade Combat Team. "Afterward, you have to take a step back and think, 'What just happened?'"

Trogdon suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder. He ministers to most of the casualties who pass through the base's medical clinic before pivoting to a task he considers as vital as comforting the physically wounded: providing solace to those who must continue fighting when injury or death steals a comrade.

Members of the soldier's platoon had gathered at the clinic that June afternoon. Trogdon met with them after the medevac helicopter lifted off. Fury mixed with grief. He urged the men to open up to each other in the coming days. "I tell our soldiers all the time that the combat stress is always there. It's in them and it's going to come out one way or another," said Trogdon, 52, of Camden, New Jersey. "The best way to get it out is by talking to someone, especially their buddies."

He knows from experience the corrosive effect of repressing anxiety and anger. His return to war this year after three tours is motivated, in part, by a desire to show fellow troops that mental trauma can be tamed.

"Sometimes I get asked, 'Does it bother you that people know you have PTSD?' And, I say 'No. I earned it. If I can help someone else and help reduce the stigma, then it's worth me talking about it.'"

### ***"What's wrong with me?"***

In 2008, early in a 15-month tour in Iraq, Trogdon suffered a traumatic brain injury when a mortar exploded within 30 feet of his office at Camp Victory in Baghdad's Green Zone. Stalked by headaches and groping for scraps of sleep, he finished out the deployment rotating among more than 30 bases to minister to soldiers.

The symptoms of his injury persisted after he returned home, even as he popped Excedrin Migraine pills like Skittles. The physical pain was compounded by a creeping sense of alienation from family and congregants. Yet, amid a fraying marriage and sporadic bouts of compassion fatigue, he felt too ashamed to reveal his struggle.

"I kept thinking, 'I'm a chaplain, I'm not supposed to go through this. What's wrong with me?'" Trogdon said. He was seized by self-loathing, and by early last year, his psyche had fractured. "I actually wanted to die," he said. "I wasn't going to kill myself. But, there were times when I would lay down at night, close my eyes, and pray 'God, take me. I don't deserve to live.'"

Military doctors had prescribed medications that failed to ease his headaches. The drugs fogged his mind; he often stopped talking mid-sentence, unable to remember his line of thought. He found himself on the brink of a medical discharge until a visit last spring with a neuropsychologist at his unit's base in Fort Stewart, Georgia. The clinician concluded that, while his traumatic brain injury had mostly healed, he was plagued by PTSD and depression. The dual diagnosis reflected the psychological fallout from presiding over more than 400 memorial services and funerals, and from the rigors of deployment.

He has commiserated with the families of soldiers who com-

mitted suicide and young couples who lost newborns. During a tour in Iraq in 2003, he witnessed the carnage of the U.S. Military's Shock and Awe bombing campaign and ensuing ground invasion. "I saw more death than I'd ever imagined I'd see," he said.

Reviewing Trogdon's career history, another psychologist told him, "On a trauma scale of one to ten, you are a thousand." Though the causes were apparent to behavioral health providers, he greeted the diagnosis with disbelief.

"TBI—at least that's a battle injury," he said. "Now, they are telling me I'm depressed and I got PTSD? An emotional injury?"

He offered a similar rationale for refusing a Purple Heart for the mortar attack in 2008. "Why should I be honored when there are guys who have been killed, guys who have been seriously wounded physically?"

### ***"God is using me."***

Trogdon has emerged from his inner darkness in the past year, aided by counseling and an antidepressant he calls "my crazy pill." He repaired his marriage and rediscovered purpose in his ministry. The experience has changed his perspective on post-traumatic stress, a malady he now recognizes as legitimate, debilitating, and within the military, disturbingly common.

"I talk to so many soldiers with PTSD-type symptoms and TBI that haven't received help," said Trogdon, who accepted the Purple Heart last summer for his brain injury. He notices a particular reluctance among low-ranking soldiers, who fear appearing vulnerable to superiors.

### ***"Why should I be honored when there are guys who have been killed, guys who have been seriously wounded physically?"***

"Many times, for one reason or another, soldiers think that what they are feeling is wrong," he said. "So, I tell my story, and sometimes they feel better, because if the brigade chaplain has PTSD, then it must be okay for a specialist or private to have it."

Trogdon understood before starting his fourth tour that he would absorb more anguish. His unit deployed to Afghanistan and patrols Logar and Wardak provinces, immediately south of



**“As a chaplain, the greatest satisfaction is knowing that God is using me to help someone through the worst day of their life.”**

the capital of Kabul, an area that remains riven with violence after more than 11 years of war. A handful of the brigade’s soldiers have been killed, and dozens maimed by bullets, mortars, and IEDs. Attending to casualties in the medical clinic is a self-imposed duty that can inflame his PTSD, causing him to briefly withdraw and rupturing his sleep. Enduring the symptoms is the cost of fulfillment.

“As a chaplain, the greatest satisfaction is knowing that God is using me to help someone through the worst day of their life,” said Trogdon, who, with his wife, Connie, has two children and four grandchildren. “I want to be here for the guy who was wounded. I want to be here for his buddies.”

He draws on his awareness of mental trauma when consoling soldiers distraught by a friend’s death or injury, reassuring them that rage and despair are natural reactions to war’s disorder. The conversations are confidential, a guarantee of privacy that allows for candor.

“Eighty percent of what I do is listen,” he said, sitting in his small office, its plywood walls decorated with photos of his grandkids. “That 19-year-old or 20-year-old private doesn’t really understand all this ‘psycho stuff’ anyway, or even the spiritual importance of talking. What matters is that they are getting something out that’s bothering them.”

He recalled meeting with a soldier who had seen members of his platoon badly wounded when their armored vehicle struck an IED. The specialist, in tears, divulged that he was suffering from flashbacks, lack of sleep, and loss of appetite.

“Good,” the chaplain replied. The soldier stared, confused.

“If something like that happened and you could just go on like it was nothing, you would be crazy,” Trogdon said. “I’ve got news for you: you’re normal.” **ONE**

*About the Writer:* Martin Kuz is a freelance writer covering Afghanistan.

*This article first appeared in Stars and Stripes. Reprinted with permission of the author.*

# IMPACT

## FORT WORTH

Work for a Day... **IMPACT** for Eternity

July 26 — Fort Worth, Texas | [www.fwbmastersmen.org](http://www.fwbmastersmen.org)

NYC News >>

# authentic

Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart  
Be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer.

PSALM 19:14

Join us in Fort Worth, July 27-30, 2014, as we examine our words  
and thoughts in the light of God's Word.

## SPEAKERS:



TUESDAY NIGHT EVENT @ 9PM / \$10  
SHANE & SHANE



SUNDAY AM  
Neil  
Gililland



SUNDAY PM  
Eddie  
Moody



MONDAY PM  
Angie  
Outlaw



TUESDAY PM  
Richard  
Ross

## buçk a week PROJECTS

Remember to continue your support of  
our missionary projects for 2014:

- Creative Access Projects with International Missions
- The Wright Family in McKinney, TX

**REMINDER**  
Competition Registration  
Forms due June 1

**NYC CONFERENCE FEES:**  
Competition Event Fee for all events  
(often paid by the association)

Student Conference Fee: \$25 at  
preregistration (grades 1-12)

Adult Conference Fee: \$15  
(for access to competition and NYC  
worship services)

Many **Free Will Baptist churches** have children's church. Does yours use the FWB children's church curriculum?

Try **elements**<sup>TM</sup>  
kids worship by randall house

Entirely downloadable  
Large group format

**ELEMENTSKIDSWORSHIP.COM**



# About the Denomination >>

## Introducing 2014 Convention Nominees

**Antioch, TN**—The 2014 nominating committee met Monday, March 3, at the Free Will Baptist Executive Office. Members include Edwin Hayes (OH), David Shores (IL), Donnie Miles (SC), Brent Patrick (VA), Chris Truett (NC), and Rick Scroggins (CA).

The board recommended the following nominations for board and commission positions to be filled at the 2014 National Association of Free Will Baptists in Fort Worth, Texas, according to Edwin Hayes (OH), Nominating Committee chairman:

## 2014 Election Schedule for Standing Boards and Commissions

### Board of Randall House Publications 2020

**Paul Bryant, Mississippi**  
(replacing Danny Dwyer, North Carolina—ineligible for re-election)

*Paul Bryant is senior pastor of Cross Creek Free Will Baptist Church in Olive Branch, Mississippi, where he has served since 2008. The Florida native received a B.A. degree in Pastoral Ministry from Welch College in 2004 and the M.Div. degree from Beeson Divinity School at Samford University in 2007. Bryant has been a member of the Mississippi Executive Board since 2010, moderated the Little Brown Creek Association from 2011-2012, chaired the Mississippi Conference and Itinerant Ministries Board from 2008-2010, and directs both Mississippi State Teen Camp and Morganwood Youth Camp. He and his wife Beth have two children.*

**Steve Lindsay, Alabama**  
(replacing Steve Lindsay, Alabama)

**Randy Scott, Arkansas**  
(replacing Randy Scott, Arkansas)

### Board of International Missions 2020

**Janice Banks, Oklahoma**  
(replacing Janice Banks, Oklahoma)

**Jeff Manning, North Carolina**  
(replacing Jeff Manning, North Carolina)

**Jeff Nichols, Tennessee**  
(replacing Robert Morgan, Tennessee)

*Jeff Nichols has been executive pastor of The Donelson Fellowship Free Will Baptist Church in Nashville, Tennessee, since 2005. Prior to this role, he served 15 years as youth/children's pastor at churches in Missouri and Tennessee. The Mississippi native earned a B.S. degree in Christian Education from Welch College in 1987 and a Master's Degree in Business from Trevecca Nazarene University in 2006. He has served on the Executive Committee of the Tennessee State Association, as a member of the Cumberland Association Christian Education Board, and on the Advisory Council for both Free Will Baptist International Missions and The Hanna Project. He and his wife Debbie have two daughters.*

### Board of Trustees of Welch College 2020

**Jeff Crabtree, Atlantic-Canada**  
(replacing Jeff Crabtree, Atlantic-Canada)

**Shiloh Hackett, Alabama**  
(replacing Shiloh Hackett, Alabama)

**Brad Ryan, Illinois**  
(replacing Rusty Russell, North Carolina)

*Brad Ryan has pastored Ina Free Will Baptist Church in Ina, Illinois, since 2001. Prior to this pastorate, he served three years as youth pastor at Mt. Zion Free Will Baptist Church in Joelton, Tennessee, and taught physical education for three different schools from 1995-2001. The Illinois native earned a B.S. degree from Welch College in 1995. He has moderated both the South Central Quarterly and the Rend Lake Quarterly Conferences in Illinois, is a member of the Illinois Camp Board, and serves as the Ina police chaplain. He and his wife Tommi Joann have four children.*

### Free Will Baptist Foundation 2015

**Gene Williams, North Carolina**  
(Replacing Len Blanchard, Alabama)

*Gene Williams has been senior pastor of Parkers Chapel Free Will Baptist Church in Greenville, North Carolina, since 2008. An eastern North Carolina native, he attended East Carolina University and earned a B.S. degree in Psychology. He later completed his education at Southeastern Free Will Baptist College, where he earned a B.A. degree in Bible and Pastoral Theology in 1999. He has served as a youth pastor, educator, guidance counselor, and associate pastor in two other ministries in North Carolina and Virginia. He served as associate pastor of Parkers Chapel from 2003-2007 before he became the senior pastor. Williams served nine years on the Alumni Board of Southeastern FWB College and has also been a member of Southeastern's Board of Directors since 2008. He and his wife Leslie have three children.*

# Pre-Registration

## 2014 National Association of Free Will Baptists

WNAC | NYC | Ft. Worth, Texas | July 27-30, 2014

**One Form Per Person | Register Online: [www.nafwb.org](http://www.nafwb.org) | Name Badges Required for All Convention Events**

First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Missionary Country (if outside USA) \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (preferably cell) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Church You Attend \_\_\_\_\_ Church City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

### National Association

(All voting delegates must be members in good standing of a FWB church.)

#### Voting Delegates:

- National Board/Commission Member
- Ordained Minister
- Ordained Deacon
- State Delegate (Authorization Required)
- Local Church Delegate (Delegate Card Required)

#### Non-Voting:

- Licensed Minister
- Attendee (includes infants and toddlers)

#### Tickets:

Welch College Alumni & Friends Luncheon ..... Qty \_\_\_\_\_ x \$30 = \_\_\_\_\_  
Wednesday, July 30, 12:00 noon

**National Association Information: [www.nafwb.org](http://www.nafwb.org)**

### National Youth Conference

#### Preschool:

- Ages 3-5, Attending Preschool Worship - **\$25** (\$35 on-site)
- Ages 0-5, Not Attending Preschool Worship - NO FEE

#### Students: \$25

Any student or competitor\* attending any NYC competition or event MUST pay \$25 (\$35 on-site).

- Grades 1-3
- Grades 4-6
- Grades 7-12

\*Competitors must pay \$25 registration fee in addition to competition fees already paid.

#### College Age / Adults: \$15

Adults attending any NYC competition or event MUST pay \$15.

- Adult Attendee (No students or children)

#### Tickets:

Shane & Shane Concert ..... Qty \_\_\_\_\_ x \$10 = \_\_\_\_\_  
Tuesday, July 29, 9:00 pm

**NYC Information: 800-877-7030 | [www.fwbny.com](http://www.fwbny.com)**

### Women Nationally Active for Christ

#### Voting Delegates:

- National Executive Committee
- State President
- State Field Worker
- State Delegate (Authorization Required)
- Local WNAC Delegate **\$10**

#### Non-Voting:

- Missionary
- Attendee

#### Tickets:

WNAC Laughter and Latté ..... Qty \_\_\_\_\_ x \$15 = \_\_\_\_\_  
Monday, July 28, 8:30 p.m.  
WNAC Missionary Mingle Luncheon ..... Qty \_\_\_\_\_ x \$25 = \_\_\_\_\_  
Tuesday, July 29 11:30 a.m.

**WNAC Information: 877-767-7662 | [www.wnac.org](http://www.wnac.org)**

**Register April 1 – June 27, 2014 (postmarked)  
No Refunds After June 27**

#### PAYMENT OPTIONS:

- + Check (Payable to FWB Convention)
- + Visa or MasterCard only (both debit and credit cards accepted)

Card # \_\_\_\_\_

Card Holder \_\_\_\_\_ Exp \_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_

#### RETURN TO:

##### Convention Registration

PO Box 5002  
Antioch, TN 37011 / FAX: 615-731-0771

**Questions: 877-767-7659 / [convention@nafwb.org](mailto:convention@nafwb.org)**

Office Use Only: Date \_\_\_\_\_ CK# \_\_\_\_\_ Amt \$ \_\_\_\_\_ From \_\_\_\_\_



# Convention Housing

## 2014 National Association of Free Will Baptists

### Omni Fort Worth Hotel (HQ)\*

1300 Houston Street  
Fort Worth, TX 76102  
1-800-THE-OMNI (843-6664)  
Rate: \$151  
Valet Parking: \$15  
Self Parking: \$15 (no in & out privileges)  
Mention 2014 NAFWB for group rate.  
Limit of 3 reservations\* per individual.



### Sheraton Fort Worth Hotel & Spa

1701 Commerce Street  
Fort Worth, TX 76102  
888-627-8556  
Rate: \$146  
Group Code: NAFWB7  
Valet Parking: \$18  
Self-Parking: \$10  
Limit of 9 reservations\* per individual.



### Historic Hilton Fort Worth

815 Main Street  
Fort Worth, TX 76102  
Rate: \$129  
Group Code: FWB  
Reservations: 1-800-HILTONS  
(445-8667)  
Valet Parking Only: \$15  
Limit of 9 reservations\* per individual.



### Courtyard by Marriott Downtown

601 Main Street  
Fort Worth, TX 76102  
1-800-321-2211  
Rate: \$129  
Group Code: FREFREA (one bed) or  
FREFREB (double beds)  
Valet Parking Only: \$20.00  
Limit of 9 reservations\* per individual.



+ Reservations can be made by  
telephone or Internet.

+ Room rates do not include  
applicable taxes (15%).

+ Cancellations will be charged one  
night's room and tax per reservation.

### 1. Prepare Personal Information

You will need the following:

- + Name(s)
- + Address, City, State, Zip
- + Phone/Email
- + Credit Card Information
- + Special Requests:
  - Non-Smoking Room
  - Wheelchair Accessibility
  - Rollaway Bed
  - Crib

### 2. Contact Your Hotel of Choice

(See details above.)

Reservations will open at 9 am, CT,  
10 am, ET, Monday, May 5, 2014.

Hotels have been instructed **NOT**  
**TO ACCEPT** reservations before this  
time.

+ Cut-off date: Friday, June 27, 2014.

### 3. Receive Your Confirmation

On Monday, May 5, links to  
hotel reservations will  
be available at:

[www.nafwb.org](http://www.nafwb.org).

\*Groups making reservations that  
exceed the hotel limit policy may  
contact the Executive Office for more  
information: 877-767-7659.

## Commission for Theological Integrity 2015

**Rodney Holloman,**

North Carolina

(replacing Craig Shaw, Oklahoma)

*Rodney Holloman was a professor at Southeastern Free Will Baptist College from 2003-2013, and chaired the Bible Department for seven years. During this time, he served as interim pastor for six different churches and spent six years as senior pastor at Emmanuel Free Will Baptist Church, Sharpsburg, North Carolina, and three years as senior pastor at Ahoskie Free Will Baptist Church in Ahoskie, North Carolina. Holloman earned a B.A. degree from Southeastern Free Will Baptist College in 1992, an M.A. degree from Pensacola Christian College in 1996, and is currently pursuing both M.Div. and D.Min degrees from Bob Jones University. He is an adjunct professor at Cedars of Lebanon Seminary in Pinar del Rio, Cuba, and the Free Will Baptist Seminary in Barbacena, Brazil. He contributed to the book *The Free Will Baptist Guide for New Believers* (Randall House, 2012). He and his wife Andrea have two children.*

## 2019

**Randy Corn,** Tennessee

(replacing Randy Corn, Tennessee)

## Historical Commission 2019

**Robert Picirilli,** Tennessee

(replacing Robert Picirilli, Tennessee)

## Music Commission 2019

**Kevin Justice,** North Carolina

(replacing Kevin Justice, North Carolina)

## Media Commission 2019

**Josh Owens,** Tennessee

(replacing Josh Owens, Tennessee)

## Executive Committee 2017

**Stan Bunch,** Missouri

(replacing Stan Bunch, Missouri)

**Wayne Hale,** Mid-Atlantic

(replacing Wayne Hale, Mid-Atlantic)

**Daniel Edwards,** Indiana

(replacing Venny VanHoose, Kentucky)

*Daniel Edwards has been pastor of Faith Free Will Baptist Church in Chandler, Indiana, since 2005. The Virginia native graduated from Gateway Free Will Baptist College in 2004,*

*with a B.A. degree in Pastoral Ministry and Education. He is a member of the General Board and promotional secretary of the Indiana State Association, where he also served three years as assistant moderator. He was a member of the board of Child Evangelism Fellowship in Evansville, Indiana, from 2008-2012, and has been a board member for Newburgh Christian School since 2010. He and his wife Nicole have two children.*

## General Officers

**Moderator:**

**Tim York,** Tennessee

(replacing Tim York, Tennessee)

**Assistant Moderator:**

**William Smith,** Georgia

(replacing William Smith, Georgia)

**Clerk:**

**Randy Bryant,** Florida

(replacing Randy Bryant, Florida)

**Assistant Clerk:**

**Ernie Lewis,** Illinois

(replacing Ernie Lewis, Illinois)

**The following boards do not elect members in 2014: Home Missions, Board of Retirement, and Master's Men.**

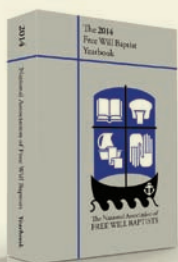
## Media Commission to Provide Archived Convention Services Online

**Antioch, TN**—Since 2010, the Free Will Baptist Media Commission has partnered with the Executive Office to provide live streaming of worship services. Due to the prohibitive cost of Internet services at the convention center this year, live streaming will not be possible.

In order to accommodate those who are unable to attend the convention, archived copies of the services will be made available online. Audio podcasts of each service will be posted online immediately following the service. Video of services will not be posted until a later date following the convention.

Archived audio and video files will be available for free download. Copies of CDs or DVDs will no longer be available for purchase or order at the convention.

The Media Commission will also be posting sermon quotes, video clips and photos on their Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/fwbmedia>), Twitter (@fwbmedia) and website (<http://www.fwbmedia.com>) throughout the convention.



## 2014 Yearbook Now Available

**Antioch, TN**—The 2014 Free Will Baptist Yearbooks have been mailed to district association clerks for distribution of complimentary copies to local churches. If you wish to purchase a copy for personal use, contact Randall House Publications at 800-877-7030 or visit [www.RandallHouse.com](http://www.RandallHouse.com).



Photo: Mark Cowart



**KEITH BURDEN, CMP**  
Executive Secretary  
National Association  
of Free Will Baptists

## ONE to ONE >>

### Witnessing in Spite of Ourselves

In February 1992, I participated in a mission trip to Côte d' Ivoire, West Africa. Our primary objective was to assist in the construction of a youth center at Bondoukou. Amazing progress was made during the 24 days there. I also had the opportunity to share God's Word on three separate occasions.

When we arrived in Abidjan, we met our missionary host and long-time friend Darrel Nichols. We spent that first weekend as guests in his home. He graciously extended an invitation for me to speak at the church in Agnibilekrou on Sunday morning. I was delighted to accept.

We arrived early at church that Sunday. The building was a simple structure. As I recall, missionaries Norman and Bessie Richards and Alice Smith were in attendance that day. When it was time for the service to begin, a small but expectant group of Ivoirians assembled. The singing was spirited. The preliminaries were brief. In short order, I was introduced as the speaker.

Thankfully, Brother Darrel gave me advance warning. He explained that I would be speaking through two interpreters. That meant a

15-minute sermon would take 45 minutes to deliver.

I painstakingly edited my manuscript, leaving only the items I thought essential to communicate the main idea of the sermon.

The text was Hebrews 12:1-3. My subject was *A Call for Endurance*. I did a lot of research and chose what I thought would be the perfect illustration for the conclusion. I was prepared and felt good about delivering that message.

As I spoke, I shared one or two short sentences at a time. Brother Darrel then interpreted in

French, and an Ivorian believer interpreted into Twi. Understandably, we had a lengthy delay between my statements. However, judging from the expressions on the listeners' faces, it appeared we were communicating effectively.

When I came to the end of the message I shared the illustration I thought would be a fitting conclusion. I still recall the opening sentence: "The cheetah survives on the African plains by running down its prey."

That's when it happened. After a long, awkward pause, Darrel turned and whispered, "We've got a problem. This is the African bush... not the plains. These folks have never seen a cheetah."

My heart sank. I feared my attempt to connect with my hearers had resulted in confusion. How could I have been so mistaken? Darrel went into an explanation and, in animated terms, described the big cat. It was as though a light came on. The Africans' eyes lit up, and I was allowed to continue the illustration.

When it came time to extend the invitation, I stepped aside and allowed the interpreters to make the appeal. Frankly, I felt like a failure. I began to pray and ask God to take my feeble attempt to share the gospel and somehow make it clear and understandable. When I opened my eyes, to my surprise, four people were praying at the altar. God used my attempt to witness in spite of my failure to communicate.

Too often, Christians wrongly assume their attempts to share the gospel have to be perfect in order to be successful. Please don't miss my point! I'm not suggesting we shouldn't put our best foot forward. God deserves nothing less than our best. However, our best is *always* imperfect. So take heart! God delights in blessing our efforts to witness...sometimes in spite of ourselves. **ONE**

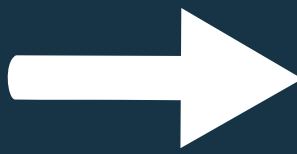


# How Does It Work?

THE DEFERRED PAYMENT GIFT ANNUITY

**\$20,634 Tax Deduction**  
Save income taxes of \$5,158

**One Gift**  
\$50,000 (example only)  
**Three Benefits**



**Gift to a Free Will Baptist Ministry**  
Approximately \$50,000

Contact Free Will Baptist Foundation to learn more about Deferred Payment Gift Annuities and other "smart giving" options:

877-336-7575 | [fwbgifts.org](http://fwbgifts.org)

**\$3,500 Annual Income (7%)**

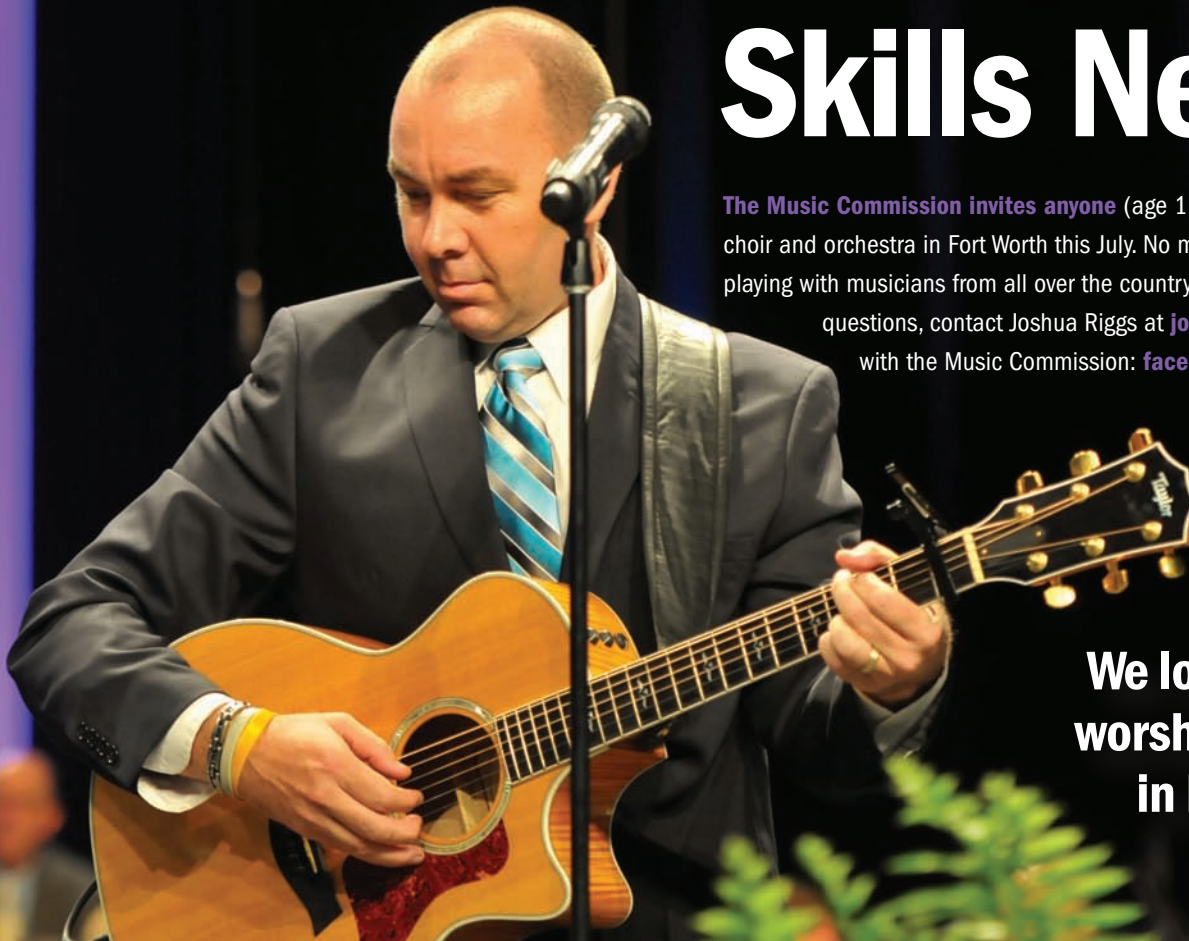
Guaranteed payout for life  
(60 year old with ten-year deferral)



## Skills Needed!

The Music Commission invites anyone (age 15+) to participate in the convention choir and orchestra in Fort Worth this July. No matter your skill level, you will enjoy playing with musicians from all over the country. If you'd like to be involved or have questions, contact Joshua Riggs at [joshua@bethanyfwb.com](mailto:joshua@bethanyfwb.com) or connect with the Music Commission: [facebook.com/fwbmusiccommission](https://www.facebook.com/fwbmusiccommission)

We look forward to  
worshiping with you  
in Fort Worth!





# Send *Hope* to the *Hopeless*

Give to the



World Missions Offering  
Sunday, April 27

FREE WILL BAPTIST INTERNATIONAL MISSIONS  
[WWW.FWBGO.COM](http://WWW.FWBGO.COM) · 877-767-7736