

The Vision

Louisville National Convention Review



Home Run in Louisville

The post-convention report for the 2017 National Convention that met in Louisville was described as the “Grand Slam in Louisville.” The 2017 convention hit another home run.

This year’s theme was “Equipping the Saints,” based on Ephesians 4:11-12. Six speakers explored the need and the means of accomplishing this biblical imperative. On Tuesday night Welch College alumni led in worship as we celebrated the school’s 75th anniversary. Wednesday night’s mission service was a celebration of how Christ is building His church through the faithfulness of FWBs to the Great Commission.

Convention attendance was at a five-year high with 4,603 attendees. 83 well-attended seminars, workshops, and panel discussions on a wide range of topics were enjoyed. 2017’s financial reports shared a brighter picture than 2016.

Fifty-five workers from ten churches and five states took part in Impact Louisville on Saturday before the Convention. They gathered at First FWB Church in Louisville for a day of cleaning, repairing, trimming, removing, and painting. After freshening up the facilities, the group helped the church host a neighborhood outreach day.

Vertical 3 registered 3,457 attendees for their conference. Over 900 students participated in the CTS Ministry Expo, and more than \$12,000 was raised through the Buck-A-Week Missions Offering. Volunteers invested more than 2,000 service hours back into the Louisville community.

Reports were heard from the eight national agencies and four commissions. Delegates approved a recommendation that a five-member committee be appointed to study the feasibility

of forming a national department focused on church revitalization. Denominational budgets just over \$28 million were approved. Raleigh, North Carolina was chosen for the July 16-19, 2023 convention; and Arkansan Melissa Haralson was elected to a three-year term on the FWB Foundation.

A new feature was added to the Convention this year: text-to-give. The Media Commission made it possible for FWB attendees to give using mobile devices during the convention. 125 donors gave \$5,548 to the convention and mission offerings; while the Wednesday night mission offering topped the \$30,000 mark.

The worship services were streamed live again this year, with more than 20,000 people watching at least some portion of the service during the week. This year, the live streaming was bilingual, translated into Spanish.

All eyes now turn their attention to Little Rock, Arkansas and the 2018 Convention. It is our opportunity to host our denomination. The last time we did this ... 2007. Plans are already being made for the Convention, and the need for volunteers will be at a premium!

In coming issues of the VISION, through media releases, and on the State website, opportunities to volunteer and help in manning hospitality tables and our state exhibit booth, participating in Impact Little Rock, being a prayer partner, ushering, and others will be shared. Please consider where **you** might give an hour or two in service to help make the Little Rock Convention the best ever.

On the Top of the Hill

by David Taylor

The Bible is full of stories that take place on mountains. Noah's ark came to rest on Mt. Ararat. Abraham was instructed to go to Mt. Moriah and offer Isaac as a sacrifice. Moses received the Ten Commandments on Mt. Sinai. On Mt. Carmel, Elijah prayed and God answered with fire from heaven.

It certainly is not a mountain, but there is a little hill outside of Conway, Arkansas where some amazing things are taking place.

When you turn into Camp Beaverfork, the road makes an immediate rise before quickly falling into the valley where most of the sporting activities and games are played. Then the road climbs "the hill." At the top of "the hill" are the cabins, bath houses, kitchen, snack shack, and tabernacle for the camp. Here the paved road ends.

Though "the hill" pales in comparison to the biblical mountains of Scripture, at the top of "the hill" the truly important moments of Camp Beaverfork take place. Let me share two in particular.

In the buildings and on the benches on "the hill," friendships are formed and forged among both youth and adults. Many of these will continue to grow over the years as boys become men and girls become women. Sometimes, a boy and a girl meet, get sweet on each other, fall in love, get married, and raise a family--all because they met on the top of "the hill."

But something even greater happens on top of "the hill." Lives are changed from the inside-out.

On top of "the hill" classes and worship services are held in the tabernacle. To the first-time observer, these may seem a little chaotic, but God always seems to be at work. As men and women teach Bible lessons, as worship leaders get the kids singing about Jesus, and as evangelists preach the Word ... the hearts of our youth are touched and come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

There are times when the Holy Spirit goes farther, calling young men to preach the Gospel, or both boys and girls to missionary service. The next generation of church workers, teachers, pastors, missionaries many times find their way into God's kingdom ministry on top of "the hill."

Do you see that eight-year old boy who has been nothing but "trouble"? He may be your pastor someday, thanks to what happens on the top of "the hill." And that girl who is quiet and shy--pastor's wife or missionary may be her lot, thanks to what happens on the top of "the hill."

A whole lot of Arkansas Free Will Baptist history has been written on top of "the hill" just outside of Conway; and I'm convinced there's so much more that's yet to come. If you will look closely, you'll also find that from the top of that little "hill," we've sent out some of God's finest workers into our churches, all across our nation, as well as to the far reaches of the globe.

For three weeks every June, a little "hill" has some amazing things taking place on it. We advertise it as camp. I like to think of it as Jesus at work in the hearts of our kids, preparing them, calling them, and sending them out to do great things for Him.

Next time someone tells you about "the hill" at the camp, don't think about the difficulty of the climb; think about those life-changing moments that have eternal results.

And while you're on top of "the hill," why not do some prayerful scouting; who knows, you may just see your future pastor!



Let the
light shine





Pastor Appreciation

The month of **October** is designated as Pastor Appreciation month. Every church is encouraged to do something to say "Pastor, we appreciate all you do for us."

Don't let the month go by and do nothing special for the shepherd who cares for your soul. Set aside one Sunday for a big "thank you." Do something on a smaller scale each week. Whatever it is, do it.

Need an idea. Think about what he enjoys: sports, fishing, hunting, woodworking, etc. A generous gift card to a restaurant he might not otherwise be able to afford is a nice touch. A two or three-day get away might be just what he and his bride need. Here's the point: get creative.

AWAC State Retreat

September 15-16, 2017
Camp Beaverfork, Conway

"Class Act"

Romans 12:1-2

Speaker: Shari Alexander



Friday Evening

Registration & Meal: 5:45--7:00 pm

Welcome

Fun Time -- Saline District

Worship in Song -- Amber Haskins

Offering

Break

Worship in Song -- Amber Haskins

"Attitude" -- *Speaker:* Shari Alexander of Mt. Home

YWAC Painting Party after Service
(young ladies 18 and under)

Saturday Morning

9:00 am

Missionary Update

Worship in Song

"Conduct" -- *Speaker:* Shari Alexander

Break

Worship in Song

Testimony -- *Speaker:* Shari Alexander

Closing

Cost: \$15.00 (children 15 and under are free)

FREE WILL BAPTIST
NORTH AMERICAN MINISTRIES
**MISSION
NORTH AMERICA
OFFERING**
NOV 19, 2017

We invite you to participate!
To find out more please visit our website
WWW.FWBNAM.COM

The Heart of a Child

As a summer project for their homeschool, Charlie and Keygan Haskins (ages 9 and 7) run their own soap and bath bomb business with the help of their mom (Amber). On their own the two brothers decided to donate 50% of all profits to FWB Family Ministries.

Opening their business in May, and advertising on their Facebook page (Haskins Soap World), as of August 1st, they have raised \$175 for FWBFM.

The brothers love making the soap, especially the bath bombs. What makes them the happiest, however, is that they are helping others in need.

These young, ministry-minded entrepreneurs want to say "thank you" to everyone who has helped so far, and look forward to how God will continue to bless.



L-R, Charlie & Keygan Haskins, Ken Winningham

D6
CONFERENCE

THE D6 CONFERENCE IS THE ONE FAMILY MINISTRY CONFERENCE FOR YOUR ENTIRE TEAM

THE D6 CONFERENCE INVITES OVER 50 OF THE TOP FAMILY MINISTRY LEADERS TO LEAD YOUR MINISTRY TEAM THROUGH A LEARNING AND PLANNING PROCESS THAT YOU'LL NEVER FORGET.

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DALLAS, TEXAS
SEPTEMBER 20-22, 2017
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Hot Springs Milestone

On Sunday February 26, 2017, First Free Will Baptist Church (Hot Springs) celebrated the 100th birthday of Helen Ewing. Her husband, Pastor John B Ewing, founded the church in 1953 and Helen has continued to serve faithfully since her husband's death in 1959.

The morning celebratory service consisted of testimonies from former Sunday school students and long time members. Pastor Doug Jones then recalled the world events that Ms. Helen has seen in her life time. Other than the obvious one he recalled that when Ms. Helen was 10 years old Charles Lindbergh made the first nonstop transatlantic flight. When she was 16, Adolph Hitler became chancellor of Germany. During her life the Berlin wall went up, and nearly 40 years later came down. She has lived through 18 US presidents and 24 Arkansas governors. During her life so far America has been involved in 15 wars and military conflicts. Ms Helen saw all three dams in Garland County being built, and was a child during the construction of the first paved road in the state.

Pastor Jones spoke on having a Biblical testimony, and how these principles have been exemplified in her life; recognizing especially her faithfulness, prayer life, servant hood, and consistent stand on biblical truth. In addition she had a superb work ethic. Ms. Helen worked for the Earl Gill Coffee Company for more than 50 years, retiring at the age of 92. And her life has had a far reaching effect. Pastor Jones' wife, Susan, was saved as a result of a lesson Ms. Helen taught some 50 years ago.



Rev. John & Helen Ewing
Joan (daughter)



To say Ms. Helen was active in the church would be an understatement. Pastor Jones said, "she invested herself in it, by giving her time, money, prayers, sweat, tears and unconditional love for the work of God. Now after a life time of investment," Pastor Jones continued, "she is reaping the rewards. In my 40 plus years of association with the church we have been privileged to have a small part in the lives of 13 boys and young men now preaching the gospel, two missionaries, and several Sunday school teachers, deacons, pastors wives and church leaders all across the globe, many of whom sat in Ms. Helen's Sunday school class or in her children's church."

Pastor Jones concluded, "we weren't so much celebrating a life of longevity this past Sunday as we were celebrating a life of faithful service to our Lord Jesus Christ. And to that I say well done." This is not the end of Ms. Helen's story however. Her mind is still very sharp and her prayer life very active; and did we mention she has a sister who is 104? We are excited to see what God will do next through Ms. Helen.

Editor's Note:

Sister Helen Ewing went home to be with the Lord on Tuesday, July 18, 2017.

Arkansas Free Will Baptists
will be hosting the 2018
National Association.

Randall University Offers Ministerial Scholarships

Seeing a need and stepping out on faith is not always an easy path. However, Dr. Timothy Eaton, President at Randall University, is determined to address a serious problem in our ranks ... a lack of trained ministers. He states, "Because we are committed to ministry and missions, and the Bible says to pray for laborers (Matthew 9:38), **we (Randall University) are offering students who enroll in our School of Christian Ministry a full tuition scholarship.** I am convinced that is what God would have us do in order to meet the needs of our churches and that God will bless Randall University's efforts."

This decision is a step of faith, for it does not come without costs. For every student who enters the School of Christian Ministry, it will cost the institution approximately \$10,000 a year. Dr. Eaton is asking for like-minded supporters to prayerfully consider making a monthly gift to this initiative. Through the State Office, direct mail to Randall University, or by going online (www.ru.edu/donatenow) you can support the training of today's and tomorrow's pastors and leaders of our Free Will Baptist churches.



RANDALL
UNIVERSITY

Arkansas Churches without Pastors

The following churches have asked the State Office to announce their pulpit vacancies.

Baker's Creek FWB Church

1581 Baker's Creek Rd
Russellville, AR 72802
Contact: Joe Ford
(479.857.0694)

Cedar Heights FWB Church

119 Locust Street
Quitman, AR 72131
(501.335.7685)

Center Point FWB Church

PO Box 519
Vilonia, AR 72173
Contact: Jeanna Branson
jbranson@wacotitle.com

Fairview FWB Church (bi-vocational)

598 Bradley 18 RD East (mail)
Warren, AR 71671
Contact: Gary Ashcraft
(870.820.2128)
(wanda_ashcraft@hughes.net)

Huntsville FWB Church

702 College Street
Huntsville, AR 72740
Contact: Jeff Reeves
(479.409.4853)
Don Smith (479.325.1046)

Oliver Springs FWB Church

3144 Hwy 348
Rudy, AR 72952
(479.474.1640)

Trinity FWB Church

803 Ashley 95 Road
Hamburg, AR 71646
Contact: Mrs. Donnie Moran
(870.853.9109)

White Hall FWB Church

103 Timber Lane
White Hall, AR 71603

New Pastors

Three pulpits have been filled this summer. We congratulate,

Joseph Hall--First FWB Church, Jonesboro

Donnie Joe Hanna--Welcome Home FWB Church, Hector

Lane Cochran--Chester FWB Church, Chester

COMING EVENTS IN ARKANSAS:

Sept 15-16 *AWAC Retreat (Camp Beavefork)*
Sept 25-27 *Minister's Retreat (Lake DeGray)*
Sept 29 *Welch College Campus Dedication*

October-- Pastor Appreciation Month

Nov 19 *North American Ministries Offering*
Jan 5-6 *Adorned Retreat (girls, 13-18), Camp Paron*
Feb 2-3 *Minister's Wife's Retreat; Carolyn Dwyer, speaker ... theme: "Mirror, Mirror."*

Arkansas Pastor Earns Doctorate

Mark Stripling, senior pastor at First FWB Church, North Little Rock, recently finished his doctoral dissertation. He was awarded a doctorate in Religious Studies with an emphasis in Pastoral Ministries from Trinity Seminary, Evansville, Indiana.

Mark and Debbie have served the North Little Rock congregation for more than 25 years in various capacities.



Debbie & Mark
Granddaughters, Caroline and Meredith

Along with his current pastoral duties, Stripling also serves Arkansas FWB as a member of the Executive Board, and is a Trustee on the Welch College Board of Trustees.

Congratulations to Dr. Mark Stripling.

Welch College Campus Dedication



*Dedication
& 75th Celebration*

September 29, 2017 at 10 AM

Join the celebration as Welch College dedicates the new campus and marks 75 years of God's faithfulness.

1942 75 2017

WELCH COLLEGE

Friday, September 29th, Welch College will have dedication services for their new Gallatin, Tennessee campus. Coinciding with the school's 75th anniversary year, the celebration will be a historical event for Free Will Baptists.



State Minister's Retreat

There is still time to register for this year's Arkansas FWB Minister's Retreat. The Christian Education Board sponsored retreat is **September 25th-27th**, at the beautiful DeGray Lake Resort in Arkadelphia.

Pastor Jeff Jones is the retreat speaker. Brother Jeff pastors the Hilltop FWB Church in Fuquay-Varina, NC. He preaches and speaks across our denomination, as well as being active in district, state and national leadership.

Our minister's retreat is the perfect place for a time of refreshing that every minister occasionally needs. At the retreat we will sing together, pray together, worship together, laugh (and maybe cry) together, eat together, fish or shoot guns or golf or just sit and visit.

Church lay-leadership, don't just tell your pastor he should attend, why not pay his registration fee (\$95.00). Slip him a little meal and recreation money. Its an investment you will reap the benefits from.

Call the state office today to register and receive additional information.



Arkansas
Free Will Baptists
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**Arkansas Free Will Baptists have a new
Website: www.arfwb.org**

It is still a work in progress, but check it out for news and information about state and national events. There are (will be) links to youth, mission, AWAC, and more.

Publication Data

The Vision is published 9 times yearly by the Arkansas State Association of Free Will Baptists, Inc. Executive Director, David Taylor, is the editor. Subscription rates are \$6.00 per subscription per year. The editors email is:

david@arfwb.org.

Stories, articles, events, pictures are welcomed. Submissions must be in by the 5th of the month for the next month's VISION.

The editor reserves the right to accept or reject any articles submitted for publication. All printed articles represent the views of the authors and do not reflect the policy or position of Arkansas Free Will Baptists.

National Hosting Fee

Thank you to all the churches who have stepped up to the plate, helping with our obligation to host the 2018 National Association next July in Little Rock. Through the end of July we have received **\$16,130.25**.

Our goal is **\$40,000**.

As you can see we still have **\$23,869.75** to raise.

We have asked that every church would consider sending a **\$200** gift for our hosting fee. Some churches that were able have sent more. But even many of our smaller churches have sent the full amount. Maybe your association would consider sending a gift.

I know it seems a long way away, but July 2018 will be here sooner than we think.

Thank you in advance for what I know you will do.

