

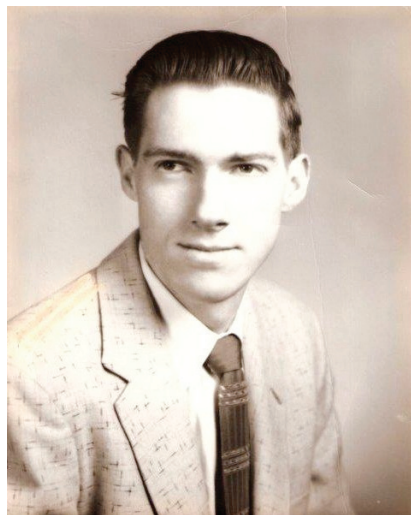
THE TEXAS CHALLENGE

**My Brother, Your Servant
Standing In the Gap
Even With a Different Outcome?
Reasons For Missions (part 2)
Woodforest Mission in Conroe**



My Brother, Your Servant

by Ruth Richards



Bro. Bobby Ferguson was born April 18, 1936, in Arkansas. Our mother died in 1948, leaving him and his siblings to help care for the younger ones. When I started to school, I sat with him in one long desk in a one-room schoolhouse.

He also made me do my homework at night. He's been "sitting beside me" and giving good advice ever since.

Our family moved to Texas in 1952, and although Bobby was working for \$95.00 a week, he felt the need for more formal education in order to serve the Lord better. He enrolled in Free Will Baptist Bible College (to those of us who attended, it will always be that) in 1955. After graduation in 1959, Bobby took his first pastorate at Mt. Olive FWB Church, outside of Henderson, TX, for



\$45.00 per week. It wasn't long before a beautiful young lady named Bettie Hunt caught his eye. They were married on June 19, 1960, at Mount Olive, which years

later was to become his father C. F. Ferguson's last pastorate.



Sister Bettie, Linda Holguin, Karen Ferguson and Brother Bobby loading up to go to the National Youth Competition a "few years back!"

Although Bobby's heart was for home missions, if the precious people of First Church had not been touched by a study on "Experiencing God," by Blackaby, none of the following would have come to pass:

Hispanic Mission - 1982 - Bill and Glenda Fulcher; then Bro. Dino Urenas

Westfield Mission - 1994 - David and Rhonda Ferguson

Magnolia Mission - 1998 - David and Linda Holguin

San Antonio Mission - 2001 - set up the H. Ray Berry Memorial Fund to fund future work in San Antonio

Humble/Kingwood - 2002 - Gene and Ruth Richards

Bobby's next pastorate, a pleasant and prosperous ministry for God, was Good Hope FWB, just outside the city limits of Henderson. For a brief time in his early ministry, he served as assistant pastor, a learning experience, to Bro. H. Z Cox in Dallas.

First FWB Church of Houston was the church our family attended when we first got to the great state of Texas. Bobby became pastor of this dear church in May, 1965, and has led them for forty-seven years.

Bobby has emphasized missions throughout his ministry, from starting a mission in Tyler, TX, in 1962,

to the beginning of the Wildwood FWB Church in January, 2002.

Bobby and Bettie have two sons, David Wendell, and John Randall, and four grandchildren. Jonathan, Nathan, and Timothy are serving our country in the Air Force. Jonathan is stationed in London, Nathan in Korea, and Timothy in Japan. The only granddaughter, Alyssa Faith, is busy with high school.

Having been active in the District and State work, Bobby has held several positions, currently serving as the Moderator for the Central Texas Association. He has held revivals in different states, and has been honored to preach at the National Convention.

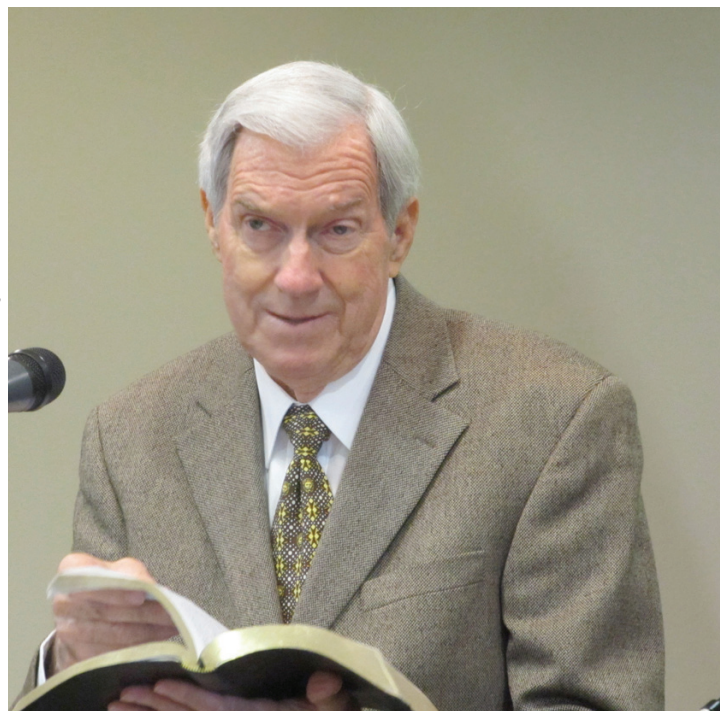
Bobby loves to pastor. He is never weary of the Lord's work, always looking out for the good of the church, even when it means making personal sacrifices, truly a good and faithful servant.



Driving Ms. Sally to Tomball

Last Sunday, August 19th, we attended church at the Free Will Baptist Church in Tomball, Texas. The Pastor is Brother Bobby Ferguson, and we have known him for years as the moderator of the Central District. We have attended church with his sister, Ruth Richards and his son Randy Ferguson at the Wildwood Free Will Baptist Church in Porter. However, I think that this was the first time we had the privilege of hearing Brother Bobby preach, at least at his home church.

Brother Bobby moved to First Church Houston in 1965. This is hard to grasp in this day and age, but he has shepherded that church since that time. Brothe



Bobby sponsored a Hispanic church (Pastor Secundino Urenas) as it began in his building. When the demographics of the area shifted, the Hispanic church outgrew the Anglo one. When the site would no longer support two large churches, Brother Bobby and his flock moved to Tomball. That is a short sentence that describes a big event. For the first few years of the Hispanic church, you did not think of Brother Dino without thinking of Brother Bobby.

The old church now has the Hispanic Church with Brother Dino and a smaller Anglo church pastored by Brother Dino's son Jezer.

Brother Bobby is finally thinking of retiring and nobody can doubt that he has earned that right. For those who have heard of recent health problems, I assure you that when he begins to preach he is still very capable of bringing it. When I think back to 1965, I think he certainly has the right to do what he feels he should.

We believe that if (or when) Brother Bobby retires, he will continue to mentor many young pastors in the area. The Lord's work will continue through them for generations to come...until He comes!

(More photos at www.meetingthetexaschallenge.com)

Standing In the Gap

Meet Brother Don Ellis

by Lee Wilcox

We manage to get around and meet a lot of people while covering events for the Challenge. There are some people you see everywhere. Sometimes when you get to know them you wonder what the denomination would do without them. Brother Don Ellis is one of those people.



I think I first became aware of Brother Don when we covered Brother Doug Dickey taking the pulpit at Fellowship in Bryan. Wouldn't you know, when we covered the 100th anniversary of Pine Prairie Church in Huntsville, there was Brother Don again. This time he was giving his testimony as one of several who had filled the gap during that 100 years.

Brother Don was born and raised in Port Royal, TN. He didn't hear voices calling him to preach. He "just knew" and that he felt a great peace come over him when he agreed.

As for what has worked well for him over the past 60 plus years, he states that the Lord has been good to him and he learned to trust Him.

"... put the best teachers with the children... always."

I asked him what he would introduce if he could. He said that he would put the best teachers with the children... always. He feels that sometimes the adults have the best teachers but it's obvious where the future lies.

Brother Don has preached at Henderson twice, at Fellowship in Bryan, Bright Light in Bryan, Lifegate in Tyler and several stops in Kentucky, Virginia, Oklahoma, and Missouri. He says he refuses to recognize retirements mastery.

September 9th and 10th will find Brother Don at Fellowship Free Will Baptist preaching a revival. He does get around! And we plan to be there to hear him and worship the Lord!

To learn more of Brother Ellis' story, check out www.meetingthetexaschallenge.com

Compiled by Lee Wilcox



Driving Ms Sally



Thebeau On the Border

Faron Thebeau was born in Panama City, FL, and raised in Fredericktown, MO. Faron answered the call to preach when he was 18 years old. For ten years he preached at a Free Will Baptist church in Bismarck, Missouri. Faron began to minister to migrant workers and that's when the call to do more lost a good preacher for Bismarck. He resigned, heading to language school and the border.

A 2-year term at Evergreen FWB in Iola, TX, was next. That was 2004; then Weslaco called in 2006.

There are things that make a church unique. Brother Faron pastors a Hispanic Church and preaches a bilingual sermon. He would deliver a thought in one language and repeat the thought in the other. That effort not only requires intimacy with both languages, it also requires the professionalism of a pastor. He has it down pat. This is the only Free Will Baptist church that I know of that approaches delivering God's word in this manner. Sally and I were both impressed.

For outreach, Brother Faron says that his church had a live nativity scene that is the only one in the area. They also do sports camps for the kids in the apartments behind the church.

Brother Faron credits Philippians 2:5-11 as being his source of strength: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus...that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God, the Father."

Eagle Heights Hires Youth Pastor

It doesn't take long to figure out that Eagle Heights Free Will Baptist Church is not the same. One of the biggest differences is the addition of a youth pastor. It's actually oversimplification to call him a youth pastor. He also led the music and started the service in the absence of the EHC Praise Team. If today was an indication, and I am sure it was, Eagle Heights has found a very able addition. The name of this addition is Josh



Feldpausch and he hails from Lansing, Michigan. That makes him a "home boy" to Sally and that is a pleasant surprise.

Josh is a fairly recent Texan. He felt God was calling him to Texas so he took the step with some degree of personal risk; he came to Houston about

three years ago. Obviously Josh isn't the only one in the picture. The pretty ones are his wife Lindsey (holding Coeburn) and with Adria, Grace, and Braelynn each one prettier than the next one.

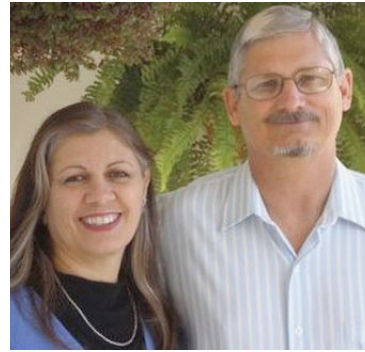
I must say that meeting them reminds me greatly of meeting a young Randy and Shelly Puckett in 1999. At that time they had two young daughters (Torre and Taryn) and were expecting Tatum.

Josh is a teacher and teaches choir at Austin High School in Sugarland. He and Lindsey met in Marching Band in college. As a grandparent I found one part of his story to tell more about sacrificial love than any other. Lindsey's dad financed the trip to Houston to interview for the job. That was knowing it was going to be much more difficult to see his grandchildren if Josh was successful. On a personal level I find that to be something that I probably couldn't do.

Considering that we set out to look at youth groups in this trip around the state, Josh and his family may well be the most important change at Eagle Heights since we last visited. He sure isn't the only one.

Last week Eagle Heights conducted a blood drive and collected enough blood to help eighty people.

Dr Eagleton and Rejane Return to Brazil



Dr. Kenneth Eagleton is quite impressive. He is a product of Texas as his father Ken is from Fort Worth and Mom Marvis from the Henderson area. Brother Kenneth shared some of his history and the

operations in Campinas Brazil recently with several Texas churches.

Ken's wife Rejane was born and raised in Brazil. Their latest newsletter has some wonderful news! "We are so thankful that Rejane has finally become a U.S. citizen. After having lived here off and on for 28 years, she was the last family member to get her citizenship. This should resolve the constant hassles that she was having upon her entry into the country. Thanks to those who helped us pray about this."

He and Rejane became missionaries to the Ivory Coast in 1984. From that point until 2002, they were on duty in that country or undergoing training to do so. He also practiced medicine and served as hospital administrator. He left the Ivory Coast in 2002 with the other missionaries who were forced out by the civil war.

The Eagletons returned to Brazil in 2004. They are stateside now but are scheduled to return on 20 September.

There are currently two missionary families from the U.S. living in Brazil. Doctor Eagleton is now primarily involved in leadership training. Brazilian pastors now manage the churches.

There are now 29 FWB churches in Brazil. There is no association, however, the matter is under discussion. The Brazilian churches have become primarily self sustaining. Many churches from Brazil (and Korea) are now sending out missionaries. They are frequently able to gain access into areas that U.S. citizens cannot.

The WMO is only about 12% of the annual budget. For those of us who might feel smug about the large contributions this year, please remember that 88% of the need was not touched. Monthly partnership donations are still needed.

REASONS FOR MISSIONS (Part Two)

LAST TIME . . .

At COLLIN CREEK CHURCH we believe and practice missions; both locally and internationally. When it comes to international missions, some of the most common questions I get about missions are:

- ✚ “Why should I go on an international mission trip?
- ✚ Would it be better for me to pray and just send money?
- ✚ I am not familiar with the language or the culture, how could I be a help?”

I have asked these same “why” questions of God and people who live in various mission fields. Some of their answers may surprise you!

Why Should I Be Involved In Missions?

- ✚ To bring encouragement to our brothers and sisters in Christ (Ephesians 6:21-22, Colossians 4:7-9, 1 Thessalonians 3:1-3)
- ✚ To bring the pattern of the early Church into the present Church (Acts through Philemon)
- ✚ To bring the blessing of the Gospel to the nations (Genesis 12:1-3)
- ✚ To bring honor to our Savior’s sacrifice (Revelation 5:6-10)
- ✚ To bring passion to our prayer life (Acts 21:1-6, James 5:16)
- ✚ To bring faces to the numbers (Matt 9:37)
- ✚ To bring forth more laborers (Matt 9:37)
- ✚ To bring to mind the serious nature of those who die without Christ (Romans 1; John 3:18; John 14:6)

Now let’s GO!

To bring us into a missional partnership with God (Romans 10:14-15, Acts 8 (Philip) and 10 (Cornelius)) – This goes along with the previous point. Every time someone comes to Christ in God’s Word there is a human messenger involved. It would be great to think that God would draw people to Himself in the world apart from someone telling he/her about Jesus. He is able, but this is not the means He has chosen to use. The Church is the means and the Church is people. The Ethiopian eunuch was reading the book of Isaiah from God’s

Word and still God miraculously transported Philip, a human messenger, to explain Jesus to him. An angel appears to Cornelius, a god-fearer. But still Peter must be summoned and travel all the way to Cornelius’ house to explain the gospel to him before he could be saved. Why didn’t the angel just tell Cornelius? It would have saved a lot of time for Peter – but God used a human messenger. We are called to be His messengers, to speak the message to all – they must hear.

To bring us into a prophetic partnership with God (Revelation 7:9, Revelation 21:24-26) – Now, it’s tricky but follow this logic. If there are people described in heaven in the future – it is logical that they must be reached with the gospel at some point in history. So, because we see a great multitude gathered around the throne from every tribe, people, and nation – we must labor to begin with this end in mind.

To bring to mind our missional accountability (Ezekiel 33) – Here is a passage that will cause you to re-evaluate life. The people of God are held accountable for not warning others of the danger coming.

To bring the principle “to whom much is given much is required” into our lives (Luke 12:47-48) – Here is Jesus’ standard. It’s a blessing and obedience math formula. Our accountability may be based on our resources, our understanding and our ability – more given, equals more expected. As American followers of Christ, we have been given much, therefore, much is required of us.

To bring our purpose to life (Romans 1:5, Galatians 3:14, 2 Corinthians 5:17-21) – You are God’s instrument bringing the blessing of Jesus to all the nations, just like He promised in Genesis 12. Jesus provided a way of redemption for all humanity (Revelation 5:9) and commissioned His followers with the task of gathering them in for God’s glory.

To bring fulfillment to the promise (Matthew 24:14) – Not sure how it’s all going to play out, but if God has promised that all nations are reached and Jesus says that the gospel will be preached to all nations . . . then the end will come. The story of history seems to be arranged on ministry of missions, even the history we are a part of today. That is exciting!

To bring forth the glory of God (Habakkuk 2:14; Ps 72:19; Isaiah 11:9) – There are at least a dozen times when God’s Word speaks of God’s glory “filling the earth as the waters cover the sea.” God has created people to worship Him and that worship is being given to other lesser things right now. Missions is spreading the worship and enjoyment of God to those who are not

currently worshippers, because God's glory is increased by the increase of His church in the world. As John Piper said, "Missions exists because worship doesn't. Where passion for God is weak, zeal for missions will be weak."

To bring to life the commands of Jesus (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8, 13:47; John 20:21) – **And last of all – because Jesus commanded it.** Just as Jesus says in John 14:21, "He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me," (NASB) or 1 John 3:24, "The one who keeps His commandments abides in Him." (NASB) I hope we can all stand before Him in the end and hear Him say, "Well done, good and faithful servant." (Matthew 25:21-NIV)

Thanks,
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A Brief Stop at Home with Bud and Ruth Bivens

by Lee Wilcox

We met Bud and Ruth Bivens on our trip to the Rio Grande Valley. Bud introduced himself as "El Vagabondo." Bud said that because of the violence in

Mexico he lives in disguise for his protection.

For several years "The Bivens" has been a name associated with the Free Will Baptist Institute at Altamira. Never Bud Bivens. Never Ruth Bivens. Always "The Bivens" as they have approached this effort together. But there is so much more.

To start, I asked Bud if he was a preacher, a teacher, or both. Perhaps he made the best categorization when he said he didn't want to be a "Christian who just warmed a pew."

I asked Bud how he had become involved in God's business. He blamed it all on Ruth. Ruth is a Registered Nurse (retired) and Bud says they started by going to Honduras and Nicaragua *19 times* on Medical missions and Bolivia with the Peace Corps in 1989. On those missions Bud did door-to-door evangelism and they had a church service before the clinics.

He did some preaching in the mountains in Puerto Rico in 1968. There they had a church that started in a carport. Miguel Rivera became their pastor at 18 years of age and is still pastor there. I believe Bud spent 6 years pastoring that church.

While selling insurance in Oklahoma, Bud continually found himself hitching a ride to Mexico with the owner of a plumbing supply business. They became acquainted with the churches in Altamira during that period.

In 2001, the pastors in Altamira asked Bud to start an institute. He kept hearing a voice telling him "You speak Spanish, why don't you go?" Finally he gave in.

Bud taught at the institute for three years. He has pretty well worked himself out of a job as the teachers are now Mexican pastors.

I asked Bud and Ruth what their wish would be for the future. They both said it would be to help their son John at the orphanage. That orphanage is just a few miles over the border from Eagle Pass (Piedras Negras).

The orphanage is not a mission and, therefore, not under International Missions. I was told they do not receive much from Texas even though we are the closest state to either work and where their home is located (Pharr). Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Alabama were mentioned as being very supportive. Now even that help is drying up. Bud says the orphanage used to get visits from about 20 groups per year and last year they saw one. Blame it on the violence.

There is sufficient poverty, drugs, and crime to discourage visitation. I also know that some folks care and have spent a lifetime in giving.

From Texas....

Light of Life Mission in McAllen Gregory and Ana Yacobian



Gregory Yacobian and his wife Ana started the Light of Life Church in McAllen, Texas, and actually were the first reason to go to the

Rio Grande Valley. The interesting story though is how this extremely talented and driven family came to be here.

Gregory was born and raised in Quincy, Massachusetts. He is descended from Armenian grandparents and might still be in the rug business in Quincy had it not been for a curious set of circumstances involving Ana.

Ana had come to Boston from Acapulco because she had helped a friend and managed to become stranded. She decided to call someone she had met in Mexico for help and that someone turned out to live about four blocks from where she became stranded. She was unaware of that until she pulled the card from her purse. That someone also turned out to be in school administration and Ana was a Special Education Teacher in Acapulco. Next came a job and work visa and meeting Gregory in church.

His calling came to him over time. He realized the Lord wanted to use him, but he stayed with his church for 15 years. Finally he gave in and left them to go to Mexico with Ana and young Greg to start a church.

Greg's experience had been as a teaching and/or preaching elder with his church in Quincy. In Mexico (since preaching was not new) the most difficult thing was the language. Knowing the situation of the people in Mexico drove him to want to lead souls to salvation. However, Greg says his command of Spanish was just not adequate.

Greg attended Seminario De La Cruz in Reynosa and became ordained to preach in the Free Will Baptist

denomination. After spending time with Faron Thebeau in Weslaco, Greg and Ana again started a mission church. This time in McAllen. The flock, however, is still primarily Hispanic and what a group they are!

As interesting as the history might be it is even more rewarding to worship and fellowship with the "little church that thinks it can...because He can!" We became acquainted with Ana Yacobian at the state convention in Henderson. She said she had a women's group in her church but wanted help integrating into the Texas Women Active for Christ. That was the primary reason for our trip to the Rio Grand Valley.

Greg (their son) is going to be on tour with Youth Evangelistic Team (YET) and placed second with his piano at the nationals. Being multi-talented, next year he will play his guitar and sing with YET. He is a big part of the worship services for his music, his videotaping, and now his efforts with Children's Church.

Josh is starting to follow in his big brother's footsteps and intends to be involved in competition at State next year.

Most of the lead-in speaking (announcements and such) in their church is done by Ana. Brother Greg is rather pleased with that. He says it is God's Miracle that finds him in the pulpit. All his life he has avoided crowds and public speaking. You cannot tell that from his sermon.

First impressions mean a lot. My first impression was of a row of backpacks on the side of the room. Those backpacks are going to the orphanage in Mexico. This church should not be big enough to fill 25 backpacks but Ana says they are "the little church that thinks it can...because He can!"

If you have attended one or two FWB churches in the past few years, you might think you know how everyone does things. If so, you are wrong. Next time you have a vacation, plan to spend your Sunday as a visitor to one of your sister churches. You will be blessed.

This church has a strong web presence. Google "Light of Life Free Will Baptist Church, McAllen, Texas," and get acquainted.

If you would like to read this story with accompanying pictures, you can visit the web site: www.meetingthetexaschallenge.com

To the uttermost parts of the earth



Anthony & Lea Edgmon Alpedrete, Spain

Maggie Paxton, a student from Welch College (formerly known as Free Will Baptist Bible College in Nashville, TN) flew into Barajas Airport in Madrid, Spain on May 24th. During her “layover” (actually it was a 7-week Overseas Apprentice experience) she helped us with some of our end-of-the-school-year activities in the Outreach Center, experienced daily life with each missionary family and helped with E-TEAM among other things.

Once the E-TEAM arrived on June 14th, we all kicked on the turbojet engines as we packed lots of experiences and opportunities into their schedule. When they returned their luggage was full of much more than their clothes and souvenirs. They also carried back with them lots of memories from their 13-day Spain Experience. Early on during their stay they began to share the love that we have for the people of Spain, and I think they even developed some “love” for the Spanish National Soccer Team, as they watched a few games with us. (By the way, in case you didn’t know Spain won the Europe Cup Tournament for the 2nd time in a row.) The E-TEAMers examined each experience, whether cultural, historical, gastronomical, congregational or personal to gain a better understanding of life and ministry in Spain. They were also challenged to examine what part they should play in helping to establish a church planting movement in Spain or other areas. They did experience a bit of turbulence as they faced some culture shock and some uncomfortable situations, but they

were able to work through those things perfectly fine.

One of the highlights for the team (and for the Alpedrete Team) was the Outer Space Party that they helped us host in the Outreach Center. We all worked to get the party ready with several stations and activities. The approximately 35 children blasted off with a story time. Then as they soared through the atmosphere they went to face-painting, balloon art, snack time, photo booth and crafts stations. We had a good mixture of kids from the community and kids from church. The following day in the Sunday service the E-TEAM participated in our special service praising God for the wonders of His creation. They sang, did a mime and a couple of them shared testimonies. We actually had a record attendance at the Alpedrete Church with 74 people that Sunday, June 17th.

Our high-flying adventures continued on into July in Alpedrete. This time the occasion was for our Amazing Wonders Aviation VBS (Las Maravillas Increíbles de la Aviación). We began preparing a couple of weeks ahead of time. It was wonderful to see fifteen adults and fifteen kids (all from our church plus Maggie our OA and Sam McVay) help build and paint all of the sets for the VBS. The flight crew of nine people, plus the pilot (Kristi Johnson) worked together extremely well. Takeoff was this past Monday, July 16th. We had an average of 34 kids throughout the VBS, with nearly 45 different kids who came at least once during the week. The highest attendance was on Wednesday night, which was the most evangelistic night of the week as the kids learned the ABCs of salvation. The song for the day and the closing skit presented a very clear evangelistic message. We were jittery with excitement about the opportunity to share this message with several children and some of their parents who do not attend any evangelical church. Photos at <http://www.fwbgo.com/missionaries/edgmon>

Thank you for all of your prayers. Please continue to pray for those who heard the Gospel message this week, those with whom we maintain regular contact and for the continued growth of the Alpedrete Church. Praise the Lord with us that we are seeing a true team spirit in the church and for such a great VBS. Thanks to all who have given to the WMO, which at last date was nearly \$1 million! If you would like to give an additional gift or set up a monthly gift please go to <http://www.fwbgo.com/giving.html>

Summer 2012 has seen a lot of activity and a number of changes within Texas Free Will Baptists, including a successful State Meeting hosted by the First FWB Church in Henderson. This year's meeting had some "firsts", such as an appearance (and a great music and drama program) by the National Youth Evangelistic Team and the first-ever ETC Church Ministry Conference.

Also among the noteworthy events at this year's State Meeting were the election of state officers. At this meeting, Rev. Keith Woody effectively retired from his position as the state moderator, a position he has held for 16 years, in declining to be nominated for another term. As moderator, Bro. Woody has served the state faithfully and represented us well on our behalf at the National Association and in his many various duties here at home. He also served as Texas' representative to the National Association's General Board and served on the Executive Board in recent years. Bro. Woody has stepped down from some of these and other denominational positions to focus more of his attention on his pastoral duties at the Lakehills FWB Church in Cedar Park, which God has blessed and grown under his leadership. Bro. Woody said that he also intends use this opportunity to spend more time with his extended family. During the State Meeting, Bro. Woody was recognized by the State Association for his 16 years of service, but we want to take the opportunity to do so again in this space. Under his leadership, the state's Executive Board and our other boards and committees have seen many new opportunities to serve and represent Texas Free Will Baptists and there is a great foundation on which to build.

That brings us to some of the other changes we saw at the State Meeting. Obviously, given Bro. Woody's decision, there was a need to elect a new moderator for the State Association. As many of you are by now aware, the Nominating Committee and the voting body at the State Meeting saw fit to bestow that honor, and all of its corresponding responsibilities, on me. I am truly grateful for the trust that you have shown in me to place me in this position, and I covet your prayers as I make the transition from clerk to moderator. I will still hold the position of State Office Coordinator for the foreseeable future, so the new combination of posi-

tions provides a way for me to represent Texas Free Will Baptists in more ways than ever before. It is a bit unusual among our denomination to have a moderator who has not served as a pastor, but I will be looking to maintain and build upon the foundation that has already been laid, with the faithful and capable people who have served and are currently serving in many duties at the statewide level, as well as all of you who pastor or otherwise serve in your local church.

I would be remiss if I did not mention that we have a terrific person who will be coming in behind me to fill the position of clerk for the State Association. Rev. Doug Dickey, who happens to be my pastor at Fellowship FWB Church in Bryan, was elected as the clerk, and we will be working together to make a smooth transition and efficiently perform the responsibilities of the State Office.

There are some exciting times ahead for Texas Free Will Baptists, and we need to be ready to seize the opportunities as they come. I have had a number of pastors and other friends from other states commend us on our spirit of cooperation and fellowship, our welcoming attitude, and our desire to see God's kingdom grow. We will have a tremendous opportunity to show those characteristics to the entire denomination in two years, when we host the 2014 National Convention in Fort Worth, coinciding with our association's 100th anniversary. To help us maintain those ties with our national counterparts, Bro. Woody has agreed to serve another two-year term as our General Board member, and we greatly appreciate his willingness to do so.

Please join us as we work and pray for great things for Texas Free Will Baptists in the days ahead, and, as always, if we can be of any service to you, please don't hesitate to contact us.



THP School Project in Cote D'Ivoire

One of the long-term desires of any missionary is to see national believers take ownership of the various ministries and to cast a vision for the future. I have seen this happen in Cote d'Ivoire, and it brings great joy to my heart.

As the national church grew in Cote d'Ivoire and developed their vision for future outreach, they always spoke of building an elementary school. This concept had solid, strategic roots. They believed if they could reach the kids and help develop a biblical world view at an early age, the future of the church and the country would be very promising.

Often, they brought this request before the missionary staff on the field. With our limited resources, we never really felt we could make the kind of investment necessary to take on such a monumental task. We saw not only the buildings, but also the financial and long-term resource pool necessary to develop and maintain the administration, the teaching staff, materials for teaching, and the many other demands of an educational institution.

However, they never gave up on this vision. They have pressed forward in faith, believing this ministry is vital to the future of the church. In recent years, in spite of a civil war and financial crisis, they have tackled the task of building an elementary school in the town of Bondoukou. The Free Will Baptist churches throughout the country have given sacrificially to launch the project. They have started putting up the walls. This alone has inspired the people to press forward as never before to accomplish this project.

The national church has asked their brothers and sisters in the States to come alongside them to complete the building of this school. The Hanna Project has taken the lead on this and is sending a team the first week in September to put a roof on the school building and to paint it. Fourteen volunteers have pledged to make the trip. Each one will pay his own way and give of his time and talents to aid our Ivoirian brothers and sisters. Part of the team will work on the school the whole week we are in country. The other team members will journey into surrounding villages, to evangelize and provide basic first aid and treatment.

The people in the Boundoukou area are extremely excited about our participation. For us to complete this task, we need your financial support to meet our budget of \$25,000. The money will be used in the following manner:

- \$10,000 to send a container with medical supplies; 4,000 school kits consisting of notebooks, pens, erasers, etc; PET carts, which are hand-powered transportation for the handicapped; and other tools and materials for the project.
- \$15,000 to buy tin, nails, wood, paint, and other materials

Would you join us in accomplishing this project that will make a dream come true for our national church in Cote d'Ivoire? You can send your gifts to: THP, SAL VII, PO Box 41, Antioch, TN 37011.



FREE WILL BAPTIST
INTERNATIONAL
MISSIONS

Jeff & Sondra Cates *Riding for the Lord in Canyon*

Hi from the Cates,

We would like to tell you all the great things happening in our church here in Canyon. God has blessed. We have seen 2 young people come to the Lord in the last few weeks and had the privilege to see them baptized last Sunday. We are seeing God move in amazing ways. We are now in the process of building our children's wing.

Our vacation Bible school will be this month and we pray that many will give their hearts to Christ during this week. Pray for our workers as they show the kids their need for the Lord in their lives. We are having a cowboy theme VBS and are going to have pony rides, showing the kids how to rope, and crafts making stick horses. It will be an interesting week of VBS.

Justin Parker, our resident gardener, has a beautiful garden started for everyone who likes fresh produce in our community. We always have plenty and we appreciate all he does to help in our church. He is always around to help with whatever needs done. He is currently teaching the teens and we hate that his job is moving him away. He will be greatly missed. Please help us pray for more workers. We have lost 4 good workers in the last few weeks and it is hard to replace people who are good workers. We ask you to pray for us as we labor here. God is blessing and it is growing fast, but at times that makes it hard to keep up with it all. Praise the Lord for growth, however, we will take being tired every time as long as souls are being saved and people are growing closer to God.

We want to thank everyone who helps make our ministry possible. Without your prayers and support we know everything God is doing here would not be possible. Thanks again for all you do. Please keep us in your prayers as we work here for the Lord.

Riding for Christ in Canyon, Texas
Jeff and Sondra Cates
3400 FM 3331
Canyon, TX 79015
Email: jvcates@aol.com
Phone: 806-488-2357 or 806-433-6969



Mission: North America Offering November 18, 2012

We truly appreciate the support, both prayer and financial, received for the ministries of the Home Missions Department in past years. The Lord has truly been good to us though you, His people. We realize the downturn in the economy continues to be felt across the nation. We are so thankful for all that you have sacrificed to help our missionaries. Planting Free Will Baptist churches in every direction across North America is of prime importance. Planting churches has been important to Free Will Baptists for more than 200 years, and it is still important today! Winning the lost is still the number one priority. Please remember...

**MISSION: NORTH AMERICA OFFERING
November 18, 2012**

Please contact the Home Missions Department for free promotional materials at 1.877.767.7674 or through the website at www.homemissions.net.

Even with a Different Outcome?

Mick and Rachel Donahue

We have seen great miracles this week. Daily, sometimes hourly, God is answering prayers in a mighty way, and we are praising Him and thanking Him for heaping blessing upon blessing. His name is being made famous.

But what if He had responded to our prayers by taking Mitchell to be with Him instead of granting miraculous healing? Would we still celebrate and proclaim His goodness? We have a number of friends who have lost godly parents at rather young ages within recent years. Was God any less good or powerful for giving them a different outcome?

Here is where the core of our theology is laid bare: if we only praise God and bless His name and trust His goodness when things are going well, we don't really understand God or have the kind of faith He's looking for.

There is throughout Scripture a theology of suffering. Consider this:

- Most prophets were persecuted and murdered; the disciples were beaten, imprisoned, and murdered for their faith; and the early church suffered such intense persecution that Tertullian stated: "the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church."

- Romans 8:28 ("all things work for good") is found in the context of suffering (18-39). That "good" is being conformed to the image of Christ, so that we become "more than conquerors" in "tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, or sword." (vs. 35-37)

- First Peter is itself a cohesive theology of suffering. Repeatedly in the letter, suffering is connected to the glory of God.

- The New Testament often connects our suffering to the suffering of Christ, teaching that His suffering is an example for His followers to emulate.

When we are in the middle of crisis and we try to guess at the mind of God without consulting Scripture, we resemble my 5-year-old talking about astrophysics: we just don't get it. We must go to the Bible to find out Who God is and what motivates Him.

I think I can sum up the Bible's teaching in two points:

- God's highest motivation is Himself. He desires to make a name for Himself, because He alone is worthy of worship. He does this in both feast and famine.

- God's greatest desire for His children is that they look more like Christ. He accomplishes this through the work of His Spirit in both blessing and suffering.

If our highest value is safety/comfort/ease, then we will be angry with God when bad things happen to us. If, how-



ever, we have as our highest value the glory of God's name and the joy of knowing Christ intimately in suffering and the power of His resurrection, we will glorify God in both the good and the bad and we will allow suffering to do its work to perfect us to the image of Christ.

So then rejoice with us that God has given miraculous healing! But don't idolize the miracle. Let your faith be strengthened by His power so that when suffering comes, you see His hand at work there, too.

Drivin' Ms Sally

We visit a lot of churches. We develop the stories for The Texas Challenge from those visits. Our website contains these same stories with considerably more pictures. As of this date, the following is the list of stories on the site at:

www.meetingthetexaschallenge.com

- Fellowship Church Bryan
- Free Will Baptist Church, Tomball, Bobby Ferguson
- Rio Grande Valley Trip
- Bud and Ruth Bivens
- Light of Life, McAllen, the Yacobians
- One of a Kind, Faron Thebeau, FFWB Weslaco
- Meeting the Brazilian Challenge, Kenneth Eagleton
- Mark Headrick, Henderson FFWB
- Iglesia Bautista Libre, Eastside
- Eagle Heights Church
- Don Ellis, Standing in the Gap
- Dr. Thomas Marberry
- Icon - Herbert Richards

New Church Plant in Conroe Woodforest FWB



Heath and Jamie Ferguson are currently raising support for the newest Texas mission project in north Houston. The North Houston Project is going to be just north of The Woodlands in a new community called Woodforest. The Texas missions board has three acres of land already secured in the area and there are families already in the area that are willing to be a part of a new church plant.

They will be married 11 years in September and have two daughters, Katelyn (6) and Ashlyn (1). They most recently have served the Lord in the promotional department at Southeastern Free Will Baptist College in Wendell, NC as Promotional Director and secretary. They also served as the pastor of the First Free Will Baptist Church in Amory, MS for four years and as youth pastor for the two years previous.

Please pray for the Fergusons as they raise support and try to make it to the field by January. Anyone who wishes to take part in the support can send funds to the Home Missions Department in Nashville, TN, marked "Heath Ferguson Account". Any and all support is greatly needed and appreciated.

Also, you can follow the support and progress of the work at www.woodforestchurch.com as soon as the site is set up.

Missionaries to Return to Assigned Countries!!

Antioch, TN—Applause resounded throughout Memphis Cook Convention Center as delegates to the 76th session of the National Association of Free Will Baptists received General Director Clint Morgan's report on Wednesday, July 18, in Memphis, Tennessee. Morgan announced April's World Missions Offering total receipts as of Friday, July 13, surpass \$944,000. Giving God the glory for all He has accomplished, Morgan thanked the denomination for yielding to His leading and responding generously, obediently, and in some instances sacrificially.

A standing ovation greeted the announcement that missionaries were released to return to their assigned countries. Morgan called the names of those in attendance at the convention to whom he'd made the fateful phone calls in December, then asking the other missionaries present to stand as well, he announced the board's mandate had been lifted and they were free to purchase their tickets and "go home."

The board met Sunday evening, July 15, and received a report from CFO Rob Conley concerning the current financial standing of the Mission. Rehearsing the criteria the board had set—10% of budget in cash reserves, financial trending depicting consistent growth in income, and increased monthly giving—the board voted to allow missionaries to return to their fields of service as scheduled. "In December, no one could have predicted that a scant seven months later we'd be able to enthusiastically release these missionaries," Board Chairman Danny Williams stated. "We are thrilled at the way God has answered prayer and look forward to His continued working in us and through the denomination."

Those departing in coming months to their host countries include Shane and Joy (France, August 22), Kenneth and Rejane Eagleton (Brazil, September 20), Mick and Rachel (Spain, October), Jenny (Spain, October), Jonathan and Amy Postlewaite (Bulgaria, early 2013), Heath and Joni Hubbard (Japan, January), Dale and Sandra Bishop (Japan, September), and Steve and Becky Riggs (France, September).

"Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise Him all creatures here below," Morgan reiterated. "This refrain constantly resounds through my mind and crosses my lips. He alone can be praised for what we see happening both here and around the world. Praise Him for His mighty deeds!"

TWAC Retreat - “What Is My Legacy?”

Now is the time to get your \$61 into Lillian Pritchett to cover your one-night stay with 3 meals at Forest Glen Camp near Huntsville. It is located in the beautiful piney woods of Sam Houston National Park.

Our speaker Ruth Bivens will be bringing us some insight into leaving a legacy our children will be proud of.



“Teach them to your children, talking about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.” Deuteronomy 11:19

What are you teaching your children? You can know by what you get back from them...what they say, how they act...it’s all what they see in you! How many times have you heard “You are your mother all over again!”

This will be a time to get away from every outside influence, examine ourselves, pray and seek the Lord’s will in our lives. And get ready to pass it on!

Don’t forget to bring your recipes, family traditions and/or stories, and photos for our own book of legacies. Your books should be ready to buy at cost for Christmas!

We’ll have a fashion accessory swap where we bring our jewelry, hats, shoes, shawls, scarves, whatever! Each one can be purchased for \$1 and the proceeds will go to International Missions!

Karen Rust will be teaching us how to make beautiful scarves out of T-shirts at 2:00 PM on Friday and finishing up in the evening after homemade facials!

The deadline for registration is September 17th. It’s a mother/daughter/sister thing, so bring someone who is like a mother or daughter, etc. with you. We will not have classes for youngsters, so we are suggesting 12 years old and up.

Come and relax with your sisters in Christ.

Two New WAC Groups!! Austin & McAllen Form WAC’s

We are so happy to welcome two new groups to our state’s roster of WAC’s. Lakehills FWB ladies in Austin have officially become members and the ladies in McAllen at Light of Life have organized and will have their dues in by September 12.



Marsha Hood, Coordinator of Lakehills WAC

Both groups are led by energetic and God-fearing women who are full of the ideas for getting their women involved in ministries outside the walls of their own church, as well as involving the youth and their families in outreach.

You will meet women from both groups at the TWAC Retreat in October, (12th & 13th). Don’t miss out!

We’ll have canoe races in the afternoon just before you leave! Fun for all, even if you just watch and cheer!

God is mighty and God is blessing! Pray for all who can come and for those who can’t. When Texas women get together, God is there in the midst of us. *Expect mighty things from Him in October!*



Light of Life women with Sally in McAllen where we met and organized their WAC

Texas State FWB Association
13293 Tommy Smith
Conroe, TX 77306

Kimberly Johnson Granted Leave of Absence

Antioch, TN—At her request, Kimberly Johnson will begin an official one-year leave of absence on December 1, 2011. Kimberly returned stateside a few weeks ago when Lar Nova Vida (New Life) Children's Home in Araras, Brazil, was transferred entirely into the hands of local leadership.

“Kimberly's work at Lar Nova Vida was crucial in keeping that ministry functioning. Her dedication and love for the children made a big difference, keeping many of them from becoming immersed in lives of addiction and crime,” stated Kenneth Eagleton, Brazil field manager. “Kimberly was respected by many of the city authorities and professionals with whom she had contact on a near daily basis. Her work will be missed.”

Please join us in praying for her to know God's will for her life.”

Upcoming Events for Texans

October 12 & 13 - TWAC Retreat
At Forest Glen Camp near Huntsville
(More info on page 15)

October 13 - East Texas Dist Mtg
Whispering Pines Camp
Mark Headrick - 903-657-5763

November 3rd - West Fork Dist Mtg
Clyde Gillentine,- 972-288-5672

November 10 - Central Dist Mtg
At Eastside FWB in Houston
Bobby Ferguson - 281-516-9252

All Boards Meeting
January 24-26, 2013



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