

Summer 2012

THE TEXAS CHALLENGE

*The Birth of
FWB RADIO!!*





The Birth of FWB Radio

Do you remember the static and hiss of listening to gospel music on the old am radio? Yeah, me too. I remember Grandma in the kitchen, with her apron on, singing along with the gospel radio and the pressure cooker rattling in time with the music.

Well, this isn't about that.

The internet has changed the way most of us listen to music. Gone is the hiss and static, now we can enjoy clean crisp music.

I was in the chiropractor's office, lying on a therapy bed. (You know, the waterbed kind that bubbles?) Anyway, I was just relaxing and praying, when this wild idea hit me. What can I do to help the Free Will Baptist denomination? We have churches all across the country (and outside the country) that know of each other's existence but never really connect. We don't know about churches in other states having revivals, so we can't pray for them. We don't know about the immense talent that lies in the churches completely untapped...

What if we had an internet radio station that could connect everyone? (A regular radio station with brick and mortar would be way too expensive and would be limited in broadcast to a single region.) An internet radio station was the answer. Free Will Baptist Radio was born. (Or conceived,... thought up, whatever.)

Free Will Baptist Radio is an internet station where we feature Free Will Baptist talent, and let me tell you, there is some AMAZING talent in our denomination. Musically gifted individuals, that give their talent to the Lord, but very few people outside their immediate churches ever hear them.

The station will also feature Free Will Baptist preachers, and we have some dandies; news and events that are Free Will Baptist in nature, and also some interview segments, with people in the denomination.

The whole undertaking is very large. Right now we are playing some nationwide Southern gospel artists with some Free Will Baptists sprinkled in. (I am currently receiving music via e-mail and USPS on an almost daily basis, from excited FWB musicians) and we are running some tests to get audio levels right and fill the website with useful information. The official launch of the Radio/website won't be until mid summer, but you can still enjoy the great gospel music. (A contemporary Praise/Worship station will happen in the fall.)

Right now we have about 2,000 listeners a day from all over the nation, and it's growing. Please pray for me as we get ready to officially launch, and send me music from your groups or choir numbers, solos, and instrumental piano offertories. They do not have to be professionally recorded, just a good quality recording.

Thanks for listening and thanks for praying! You can find Free Will Baptist Radio at www.fwbradio.com

Nick Stewart

Pastor of the Lighthouse FWB Church in Victoria, TX





Henderson Celebrates 60 years!



Pastor Mark Headrick

May 20, 2012, Henderson's First Free Will Baptist Church celebrated 60 years of ministry in East Texas. The service was opened with the congregational hymn, "Come, Christians, Join to Sing," led by Bro. Sidney Cox. Then the crowd of members and visitors shook hands and hugged to the tune of "Family of God." After everyone was seated, Pastor Mark Headrick offered a prayer of thanksgiving, honoring our heavenly Father, and asking His blessing on the worship service.

Bro. Mark then gave a brief overview of the history of First Free Will Baptist, and introduced a video testimony of Mrs. Lucille Green. Mrs. Green is the last surviving charter member of the church. Together with her husband Homer and several other families from the Good Hope FWB Church, they stepped out on faith to plant a Free Will Baptist Church inside the city limits on May 26, 1952.



Mayor John "Buzz" Fullen

Rev. Noah Tuttle was the first pastor.

Following the video, Jennifer Taylor sang "Amazing Grace (My Chains Are Gone)."

The Mayor of Henderson, John "Buzz" Fullen, was also present for the celebration. He commended the church members for their faith and service in the community, and he proclaimed May 26,

2012, to be "First Free Will Baptist Church Day."

Edell Husband, chairman of the Deacon Board, presented certificates of appreciation to those in attendance who have served as pastors of the church, beginning with Bro. Mark who has served since June, 2008. Next was Rev. Leroy Blankenship (August, 1992—April, 1998) and Rev. Don Ellis (June, 1956—February, 1962, and May, 1979—February 1992). Rev. Harold Teague also served two pastoral terms from October, 1967—Feb-

ruary, 1979, and March, 2001—July, 2007. Bro. Harold passed away last January, but accepting on his behalf was his son, Rev. Mike Teague.

Bro. Mike sang an a capella version of "Trophies of Grace," a song written by his father, and then preached a message from Ephesians 3:20. Sharing his own memories of growing up in the



church at Henderson, Bro. Mike explained that memories are meant to remind us of what God is able to do. We are not to live in the past, but to keep moving forward in the grace and power of Christ.

After the worship, everyone enjoyed a wonderful meal together, catching up on the past, and looking ahead to the future.

Congratulations to First Free Will Baptist Church!

Cross Life FWB - San Antonio

Meet Pastor Jeremy Lightsey

by Lee Wilcox



Jeremy with daughters, Adria and Hope

think that being in a town with an Army and an Air Force base would limit the selection, you would be wrong. I actually met three sailors in attendance. That was a rare treat for this Navy retiree. Jeremy describes his church as “modern” and he tends to use the New Living Translation Bible for his message.

Jeremy was born and raised in Bryan and attended Fellowship FWB church



Time to greet one another. Lots of love flowing here!

his ministry is to have a church full of people who are passionate about their love for the Lord. This community involvement allows them to use their gifts and passions. When you attend this church and see the involvement of the Pastor and attendees, it is easy to see that they are on their way to that goal.

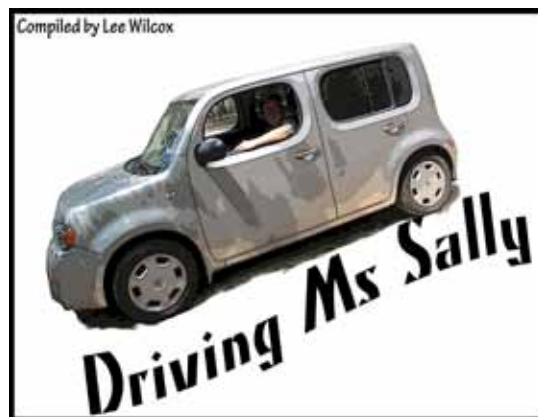
We enjoyed the privilege of visiting Cross Life church in San Antonio. It was a real pleasure. The Pastor, Jeremy Lightsey is a home grown Texan and his church is different than most. He has been in San Antonio for five years. Though still operating in a rented space there was good attendance at the service and the attendees knew what they were there for. The congregation was young and enthusiastic.

One of the things that makes this church unique is the high representation of armed service members in attendance. If you

while growing up. He says his wife Jill grew up with him there. He has been preaching 15 years with the last five here in San Antonio. He felt the call to preach at the National Free Will Baptist convention in Fort Worth and he knew that there was no rejecting it.

Jeremy and Jill have two daughters Adria 17 and Hope 12. Jeremy says that the two of them have been taught that they are to do what is right and it's not because they are preacher's kids. His favorite Bible verse is the commandment to love the Lord your God with all your heart.

The church works with the local homeless shelter and has hopes of increasing that help in the near future. His wish for his ministry is to have a church full of people who are passionate about their love for the Lord. This community involvement allows them to use their gifts and passions. When you attend this church and see the involvement of the Pastor and attendees, it is easy to see that they are on their way to that goal.



The week following our visit promised to be a fun time for the guys!

Bright Light

The variety of churches we have within our denomination is sometimes surprising. We had just visited a 5-year-old Mission in San Antonio. From there we visited Bright Light Church in College Station. Bright Light is 125 years old. If you would like to visit, the address is: 11200 Hwy 30, College Station, TX. 77845. Tel: 979 450 7229. The Pastor is Brother Danny Davis.

Brother Danny was born in Navasota and raised in Piedmont. If you are unfamiliar with the area, that is not far from College Station. He describes Bright Light as a traditional church if not country. He uses different bibles in his approach to delivering an understandable sermon. Danny started preaching

at North Zulch 15 years ago but spent thirty years as a Deacon before he became a pastor. He became licensed to preach at 16 years old at Evergreen church under brother Herbert Richards. He actually became a pastor when he was 50. Between those two points was a small matter of working for the U.S. Postal service for 30 years.



The beautiful Bright Light Free Will Baptist Church sits on a lovely acreage with a cemetery beside it. Ya'll come visit, and sit a spell...



Brother Danny Davis became the pastor of Bright Light when Brother Herbert Richards retired in his late 80's.

He met his wife Nancy in church and they will they have been married 44 years in June. His wishes for his church would be spiritual and numerical growth. For his ministry he would like to see a new parsonage for the next pastor.

The church supports Still Creek Ranch through the auxiliary. That is a youth home that houses 40-50 kids. The church also supports the Twin City Mission Homeless Shelter.

On a note that is personal to the pastor, Danny is the treasurer for Camp Sonshine. His father donated the land for the first Central District youth camp. The camp was forced to move due to utility company expansion in 1993. Danny has been involved in the camp since 1963.

Good visit, good message. Friendly people. Exactly what you want in a church.

Truth and Peace

In a culture that views college and high school as throw away years and just have as much fun as possible, a group of dedicated students gather each summer to prepare for a higher purpose. They have gathered to learn how to lead by becoming servants to their churches, their youth groups, their schools, and their communities.

This is the Truth and Peace Student Leadership Conference. It is fully Free Will Baptist, and its footprint in leadership and service can be seen around the world as missionaries, colleges, pulpits, and classrooms have been impacted by Truth and Peace students since it all began in 1984.

The conference is fifteen days of training that ultimately allows the students to become servant leaders at the National Youth Conference the time the students arrive at the National Convention, they have been spiritual gifting, personal-combined for the unique have to lead through serv-Kingdom of Christ.

A ministry of Randall the last 27 years, Truth and open online July 1, 2012 take place the summer of a 9-12 grade student in the 2012-2013 school year who is leading in your youth group or community, encourage them to apply!

Go to <http://www.verticalthree.com/truth-and-peace> to apply or to get more information.

“Truth and Peace is an opportunity to learn more about yourself, Christ, and what other Christian teens just like you are doing to make a difference!”

*Garrett Rhynes, Junior,
Russellville, Arkansas.*

every summer. By rive at the National taught about how their ity, and talents are all opportunities they ing others, and the

House Publications for Peace applications will for the conference will 2013. If you know of

“Truth and Peace is an opportunity to discover God’s plan for your life by not only learning how to be a Christian leader, but also by learning how to be a selfless servant. The experiences and lessons you learn will impact and shape the rest of your life!” Hannah Gardner, Junior, Nashville, Tennessee.



A Strong Church In Cuba

When we think about Cuba, images that come to mind might include Guantanamo Bay, antique cars, Fidel Castro, communism, or cigars. However, 70 years ago Pop and Mom Willey planted the seeds for a vibrant, growing, continuing Free Will Baptist church movement.

70 Years Strong

Cuban Free Will Baptists invited Director of Field Operations Jeff Turnbough and General Director Clint Morgan to attend their 70th anniversary association in February. See the celebration through Jeff’s eyes.

Want to learn more about Free Will Baptist work in Cuba? Impulse 4.2 tells five stories about the current work in Cuba as well as presenting “A History Lesson.” Pop Willey’s biography, Never Say Can’t, introduces readers to the Cuban work before Castro’s regime came to power.



World Mission Offering Benefits from Country Music Marathon

By Clint Morgan

Antioch, TN—The 2012 St. Jude Country Music Marathon took place on Saturday, April 28, one day before International Missions' World Missions Sunday and Offering. This year the rigorous route was tackled by three people raising funds for the World Missions Offering: Jonathan Postlewaite, missionary to Bulgaria;



Jonathan and Amy Postlewaite

Randy Riggs, Tennessee pastor; and Steve Riggs, missionary to France. Together, the threesome raised \$2,285 for the World Missions Offering.

After finishing the half-marathon, 53-year-old Steve Riggs rejoiced, "The battle is over,

and the victory has been won! In this case, the battle was the Nashville Half-Marathon, and the victory is having finished the race! I thank the Lord for His protection and strength as my brother Randy and I finished. The weather was fairly hot, much hotter than Michigan for sure, and it was a little tough, but we made it the whole 13.1 miles! I truly give thanks to the Lord for His help and strength in this first half-marathon." Steve and Becky are based in Michigan during their stateside assignment, though Steve has travelled extensively in efforts to share their ministry in a new church-planting effort in Châteaubriant, France.

Tennessee Pastor Randy Riggs said he ran in memory of his parents, Raymond and Winona Riggs, International Missions' first full-time director. "It was a wonderful pleasure to run with my brother Steve. I'm super proud of him

and Becky for their ministry as missionaries and for Steve's effort to raise funds and awareness for the WMO." Randy also noted that they used some of the race time to pray for missionaries and their ministries. He noted, "We ran to raise funds for the World Missions Offering, but I'm praying more churches and individuals will give systematically throughout the entire year, not just once a year."

Jonathan and his wife Amy hope to leave for Bulgaria in 2013. They will join Tim and Lydia Awtrey



Tim and Lydia Awtrey, missionaries in Bulgaria

in our newest country of mission work. "Shortly before the halfway point, the heat got to me and I realized I wasn't going to finish in the time I wanted.

My morale was low and I wondered if I'd even finish," Jonathan confessed. "But around mile 17 something happened to help me keep moving toward the finish. As I came around a corner in downtown Nashville, my wife, my daughter, and my mother-in-law stood cheering for me and holding a sign. I don't think it helped me finish faster, but it did remind me that others who believed in what I was doing were supporting me. I think that is one reason the World Missions Offering is so important—not only does it bring in resources to help put and keep missionaries on the field, but it also reminds them a whole lot of churches are standing with them and believe in what they are doing."

Based in South Carolina, Jonathan and Amy continue their deputation ministry, raising prayer and financial support for their first term as missionaries. They will spend May and June in West Virginia, getting to know people and speaking in churches. They will return to South Carolina for the birth of their second daughter in early August.

Reasons For Missions

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) – As in the days of the early Church, many Christians live in difficult circumstances and a visit from a brother or sister in Christ was a tremendous encouragement. Once I asked a Cuban pastor, if I should just stay home, pray and send money, his response was moving, “No, we, ‘I need your presence. I need the fellowship, prayers, encouragement, friendship and all that comes with your visit.’” His words caused me to think about my own experiences. Whenever I have gone through difficult circumstances, the presence of a friend, meant more than words could describe; even if his visit had no effect on my circumstances. We should go, because there is a great encouragement in our personal presence with others in difficult circumstances.

To bring the pattern of the early Church into the present Church (Acts through Philemon) – The early Church’s pattern was very simple: Plant or connect with a local church, after leaving, communicate with the church as much as possible and visit it as often as possible. I see this as a good pattern to follow. Our trips seek to plant or connect with a local church; providing encouragement, resources and help to further the gospel in its community. Seek to communicate with the congregation through all available means, as often as possible. Then return to continue providing encouragement, needed resources

and training, when able.

To bring the blessing of the Gospel to the nations (Genesis 12:1-3) – God has promised to bless all nations on the earth. What is the greatest blessing to all humanity . . . Jesus! Whenever we bring the Good News of Jesus to another nation, we are blessing that nation. This is missions!

To bring honor to our Savior’s sacrifice (Revelation 5:6-10) – Jesus paid the ultimate sacrifice for all humanity, shedding His blood for people from every tribe and nation. So, we, like the Moravians, should be motivated by Jesus’ sacrifice. Two Moravian missionaries once said, “May the Lamb receive the reward of His suffering!” If Jesus is the greatest gift ever given, then let’s honor Him, by giving His gift to every nation we can.

To bring passion to our prayer life (Acts 21:1-6, James 5:16) – We pray differently for people we are closer to. On mission trips I have seen new friendships come to life. While we serve, worship, confess, minister, pray and eat, with Christians from the country we are in, individuals who would otherwise have nothing in common; become friends and family. When we come home, prayers become more passionate. Why, because we are praying for friends, spiritual family members and people who are in our hearts. Ask anyone who has been on a mission trip, “What are your favorite things from the trip?” Most often the response is, “Memories.” It is these mental and physical pictures that move us to pray with passion. The passion comes, because we have a clearer understanding of the culture and the people. The people have become more than names from a far country, they are now friends and family. This all began not by looking at a picture on the church wall or reading a newsletter, it was the face to face time experienced on a mission trip.

To bring faces to the numbers (Matthew 9:37) – Today, out of the seven billion plus people on the planet, over four billion are without a personal walk with Christ. More tragic is that over half of these four billion people have no means to hear the good news of Christ. Mission trips open our eyes to the multitudes we have only heard of. On a mission trip, we can see, touch and smell these people. On a trip, we see they are not numbers, they are men, women, like us and they have children, like ours.

To bring forth more laborers (Matthew 9:37) – In the United States only one in every 20,000 followers of Christ will ever take the gospel to those who are out of reach of the church. More laborers are needed.

It is impossible to have a burden for the soul of a person you don't even know exist. When a person takes a mission trip, he/she is introduced to a whole community of people, he/she never knew existed. I have seen God take these introductions and alter futures, purposes and motivations. Thus a laborer is born! This laborer may move to share Christ in another country or his eyes are opened to the needs within his own. In either case there are more laborers.

To bring to mind the serious nature of those who die without Christ (Romans 1; John 3:18; John 14:6) – Now this can be a difficult concept for some to grasp. God's Word says the only way of salvation is faith in Christ. This means people are not saved from Hell by other religions and those who have never heard of Christ will still face Judgment. The Word of God leaves no loopholes for those living in ignorance. All are born in sin and the Great Commission is necessary for people to hear and be saved. If this shocks you, you have been influenced by the post modernism of our day. Romans 1, says creation does exactly what God designed it to do – it condemns people, leaving them without an excuse and it gives them the knowledge of a creator – but it does not give them knowledge of the Creator's gift of salvation through Jesus. This makes missions not only important, but urgent. We must be on mission!

AS WITH MISSIONS, THIS ARTICLE IS TO BE CONTINUED!

Thanks,

robert posner - 972.897.4397

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Glorifying Christ through lives of Credibility and love for the Community.

2011 M2M

Team Member Testimony

God allowed me to be a part of this mission for several reasons . . .

He did not send me to come back feeling guilty or in judgment of "American" abundance. He shared His people in their abandonment, hunger, loneliness, and daily struggles to remind me of my many blessings and the opportunities available here in America to help them and others out.



He wanted me to see how simple a smile, a touch, a hug or throwing an old, warped and deflated ball is and how these little things can revive the soul. The children at Casa Bethesda were SO happy to see us; the resident basketball player was thrilled to show us his "No look" throws. When we laughed, it made him so happy!

He showed me that I was not above being ministered to. As I sat holding Itza and listening to Pastor John and his wife's story, I began to cry. Little 3 year-old Itza reached up to clean the tears off my face! All the children from The Rainbow Home were sweet but she stole my heart.



He showed me that the time I spend worrying about what "NOT" to eat, there are those worrying "IF" they

WILL eat. The kids at the Church Neighborhood were a prime example of this struggle. Pastor Joe asked them to line up for a cup of beans, then switched gears, by asking us



to start our activity. I immediately went into a panic thinking "Oh no how can he do this to these poor kids?" The kids however waited without (*Cont'd on p.*

From Texas...

Family Archives: Ivory Coast

By J. Mark Vandivort

Sunday, March 18, 2012, missionary Mike Cousneau presented a powerful and compassionate message at the CrossPointe, Free Will Baptist Church, Norman, Oklahoma. Mike was participating in a program presenting some of the results of a 70-person team, representing several churches and states, which had travelled to the Ivory Coast (Cote d'Ivoire), Africa (1040i.org). Over 100 surgeries had been performed, eye-glasses distributed, and two schools renovated.

As I sat listening to him, my mind reviewed the long-time relationship our family has had with Mike and his family. Two events stood out. Mike's mom and dad, natives of Quebec, had trusted Jesus as their Savior and felt called to be missionaries. English was their second language and their theological studies at Nashville were difficult. I knew of a small Bible College in Quebec. After sharing that information with the General Director of the FWB International Missions Board, Mike's parents eventually completed their studies in French, their native language.

While serving as Field Secretary for the FWB Home Missions Department, Nashville, Tennessee, my family and I often spent our two-week vacation time visiting some of our FWB home mission churches. While visiting churches in New Hampshire, we learned that Mike's mother and her sons needed to travel from Littleton, NH to Oak Ridge, TN. Money for travel was in short supply, and Mike's dad was in another state raising funds for their upcoming ministry in Ivory Coast. Consequently, we invited the Cousneau family to load in with us or rather I should say "pack" in with us. Our 1963 Rambler was designed to comfortably seat four passengers. A fifth person could

squeeze into the middle of the rear seat. On this occasion the passenger list consisted of three adults and five Vandivort and Cousneau boys (prior to current seat belt laws).

We had solved the luggage problem by purchasing a small luggage trailer from a friend. He had constructed a wooden rack designed for transporting beagles. By the time I had used several yards of rope to secure the Cousneau luggage on top of ours—that tiny trailer looked like it was transporting a baby elephant.

Did I mention that money was in short supply? The road ahead involved driving from Littleton to Oak Ridge without a motel rest stop—all day and all night.

New York City. 'Oh how I prayed that we wouldn't need to take an exit from the freeway. Yes, I have been to New York, but don't ask me about any of the landmarks. We drove through in the dark of night.

They say that Shenandoah Valley, Virginia is beautiful. But all we saw was a ribbon of asphalt and an occasional stop for gas, restroom, and coffee. We even missed all the "dinners" along the way.

With God's hand of mercy upon us, we ate a bountiful breakfast at the FWB pastor's parsonage in Oak Ridge. I feel humbled that our family played a small role on the Cousneau's road to the Ivory Coast.

Our friend, Mike Cousneau, is gifted with remarkable talent as a missionary, organizational executive, and international diplomat. I remember him as small boy cramped up on the floorboard of a '63 Rambler. Perhaps God was preparing him for the rigors of "bush country" Africa.

To the uttermost parts of the earth



E-TEAM (Eagleton-Teens Equipped and Active in Missions) began in 1992 as TEAM, the vision of former missionary to Brazil, Ken Eagleton. He believed when students were confronted with hands-on missions, they were more likely to follow God's leading for their lives—whether that meant career missions or not. Learn more about the history and vision of E-TEAM.

Who is E-TEAM?

This year's 69 E-TEAMers hail from 17 states and Japan. P.J. wants "to serve the Lord and find His will for my life." Courtney plans to pursue a missions major in college. Mekayla hopes God will use E-TEAM to direct her future. Caleb wants to make a mark for God. Sarah says, "No matter what my career, missionary work will always be something I do." Meet more members of E-TEAM 2012.

Program practice during 2008 training session.

This year's theme, 100% Real Fruit, is drawn from Matthew 7:20. Students will begin posting news on June 10.

E-TEAM Leaders

E-TEAM cannot function without students who want to go (applications for 2013 due by October 1, 2012); missionaries willing to disrupt their schedules; and couples willing to give up three weeks of summer to shepherd a bunch of teens.

Interested in being an E-TEAM leader in 2013? Learn more here and apply today.

Anthony & Lea Edgmon

Alperete, Spain

FAMILY: Emily missed a couple days of school this week because of tonsillitis. At the doctor's office they also measured her pulse ox, which was a little low. In addition to the antibiotic, and maintenance medication for her allergies, she is also having to use an additional inhaler to help with the bronchial spasms. Please continue to pray for her health. The rest of us are doing well. This past Sunday was Mother's Day, here in Spain.

WEATHER: During the weather report yesterday they said that in our area of Madrid it has rained 23 out of 24 days. It will definitely help make up some for such a dry winter. Starting today, we are supposed to be getting much warmer temps. Highs around 80 degrees!!

IN THE NEWS: The euro is at \$1.29 today. The results of the Greek and French elections this past weekend have really been in the news a lot, because of the major changes in the governing party, although it looks as if Greece may have to have a do over, because not enough of the parties can agree to form even a coalition government. In Spain, the government continues to take measures to combat the crisis. Unemployment continues to rise, but they say that these new measures will pave the way for growth in 2013. According to the National Institute of Statistical Information in Spain, the unemployment rate for the first quarter of 2012 was 24.4%!!

CHURCH / MINISTRY: We had a great combo-event on May 5th. We combined our regular English Story time and our annual Cinco de Mayo party. We had good participation with about 70 people present, about half of them folks from the church and the other half from our community. For some it was the first event they had attended since our relocation. Many of them were very complimentary of our new facility. The truth is it was nice to have that many people and not feel like we were cramped in there. We are currently hearing some sermons from selected Psalms. This past Sunday, Pedro (the son, which I say to distinguish from his father also named Pedro who will be speaking this coming Sunday) preached from Psalm 19. Continue to pray for our church as it grows, matures and adjusts.

Your missionaries to Spain,

Anthony & Lea EdgmonsAnthony & Lea Edgmon



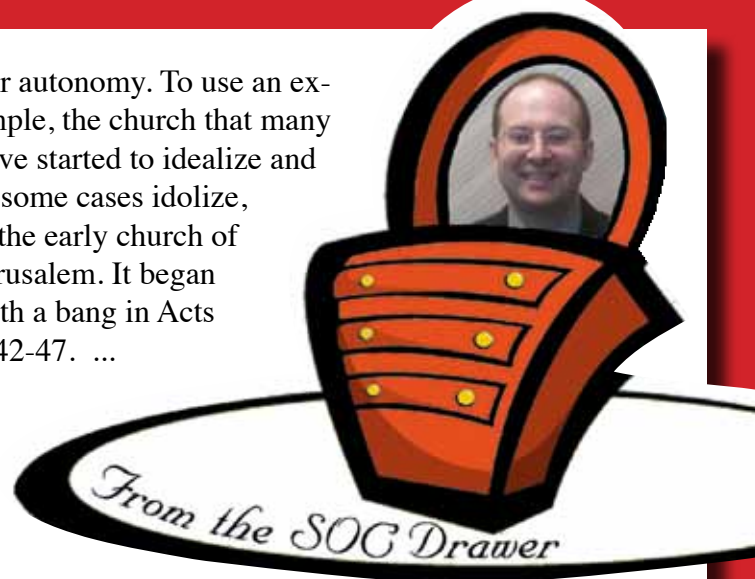
For my article this issue, I want to share with you some thoughts written by my friend Scott Collins, who pastors the South Fremont FWB Church in Springfield, MO. He discussed the importance of District Associations, applying the same thoughts to the State and National Associations as well. The following excerpts are from his article that appeared in the Jan-Feb issue of the GEM, the Missouri FWB magazine (<http://www.mofwb.org/#/gem-magazine>), and are reprinted here with Scott's permission.

So why do we do the District Association? What's the big deal? Why do we even need the District Association? Why should I be there? ... The "Why" hangs over our head as a denomination, and we must answer it or risk becoming an irrelevant, loose association of churches who do things just to do things.

Soon after I began pondering this set of questions, I watched a church celebrate its 10th Anniversary. It is a multi-site church with churches in several cities. Their people went to this gathering by the thousands. They were excited. They were excited to finally see other people from their "church". They were excited to finally gather as one "church", even though they are a part of other local churches.

As I watched this, I began to realize that maybe I had shallow ecclesiology. Maybe my doctrine of the church wasn't all that it could be. Because as you boil down the ecclesiology of many Free Will Baptists, it boils down to one word: Autonomy. The church rules itself, and it can choose what it wants to be a part of. I don't think this is wrong or bad, but I do think it is too simplistic. If we are not careful, insisting upon our autonomy can make us isolationists. I think this leads to loosely associated islanders. We stay on our island. You stay on your island, and we will gather every couple of months on one island to eat each other's food. We'll have a church service, and then go back to our respective islands to continue

our autonomy. To use an example, the church that many have started to idealize and in some cases idolize, is the early church of Jerusalem. It began with a bang in Acts 2:42-47. ...



As the church grew and started meeting in other locations throughout the city, we are told that there was an increasing effort by the church to preserve unity and encourage the parts that they were a welcomed part of the whole. What we don't see is that because of persecution and hard times the Jewish church there became increasingly isolated and moved across the Jordan

many years later to the area of Pella. ... 400 years after Acts 2, the church that inspires us with their commitment and ministry fades from history. What a tragedy! By consolation, let me say, however, that church lasted much longer than most of our churches have existed. The real issues caused by isolation, however, still remain.

Considering our associations as manifestations of the universal church is more advantageous to our Districts than just trying to carry on an age old tradition. Continuing to do District Associations "just because" isn't working. ... The gathering of the Districts is not just a District Association of loosely associated autonomous churches. Every time we gather, whether as Districts, States, the National, or International, we gather as THE CHURCH. For

Our Responsibilities:

- 1. We must gather for unity's sake.***
- 2. We need accountability.***
- 3. We need encouragement.***

Our Benefits:

- 1. We need to see that we aren't alone.***
- 2. We have a common purpose.***
- 3. We see we are part of something bigger than ourselves when we gather with greater assemblies.***

that reason alone, we could say that those gatherings are of equal importance with the gatherings of our individual congregations. As such, I believe that there are benefits and responsibilities that give these gatherings greater meaning for every Free Will Baptist.

As we gather as Districts, States, the National, and even our International Fellowship, we get to see a larger and larger snapshot of that church that worships 24 hours a day. We get to see an ever larger snapshot of what the universal church looks like. We might be able to say we get a snapshot of what heaven will be like.

I believe the consequences of an isolated church are too great for us to miss out on a greater manifestation because there might be a few headaches. The responsibilities are too important and the benefits too great to ignore the universal church. We need to answer the question "why". But maybe we should also consider what we are missing out on if we aren't taking our districts seriously and giving the place of importance that they are due as a part of the universal church.



Year to date, Texas' offering for World Missions is already \$14,052.55! One-fourth of that came from a single mission work, Canyon Country FWB Church where Jeff Cates pastors!

We are already \$6,000 over last year's total!! Praise the Lord! Keep it coming!

2011 M2M Testimony (cont'd from p. 9)

complaint; they participated in the activity then lined up in an orderly fashion for their little cup of beans.

He showed me how great our church family is. I am never shocked at how the youth show God's love, but I am always amazed as I stand back and watch. They ate what they got, they helped wherever they were needed, and they showed mercy, grace and love to the people of Mexico. The adults were just as great.

I am very grateful for having, the opportunity to serve with everyone that went and look forward to continuing in this ministry.

Rebecca Starr

*"How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"
(Romans 10:15-NIV)*

(Please go to page 14 for another testimony from M2M)

I'll Shovel, You Preach

by Clint Morgan

The beginning of this week we had stateside assignment orientation for Nathan and Linda Snow and new missionary orientation for Joel and Lydia Teague. I wish each and every Free Will Baptist could have sat in the room Tuesday morning as we listened to their stories of what God is doing in their lives and through their ministries. Their testimonies were inspirational. The Snows have been at the task for over 20 years; the Teagues were recently approved for a two-year, short-term assignment.

I took notes as they shared their hearts with the office staff during our regular morning prayer time. But, at times, their stories were so overwhelming I just laid my pen down and soaked up every word and emotion. It was a time of great rejoicing as we heard stories of people from Japan and France coming to know Christ. We all left prayer time with a clear reminder of what we are all about as a Mission and with the assurance that our missionaries are out there winning souls, discipling believers, and seeing churches planted.

Nathan shared a story that stuck in my head and heart. He told us the church where they've ministered in Japan recently called a national pastor. To help with the transition, Nathan and the pastor shared the preaching responsibilities up until the time the Snows departed. Nathan spoke of all that has to be done each Sunday in preparation for the believers to gather at the church. Some of the environmental challenges are the extreme cold and heavy snowfalls. Very often during the winter months, a foot or more of snow has to be cleared away on the parking lot and sidewalks before the Sunday morning services. Nathan and the pastor made an agreement that the one not preaching would be responsible to shovel the snow and take care of the other logistics to set up for the service. I was impressed at this expression of servanthood by Nathan and Pastor Sasaki.

I walked out of prayer time with a question ringing in my head. I asked myself, "Are you really willing to shovel the snow to help a fellow worker accomplish his task?"

I could not help but see a great parallel between what Christ said about being a servant and the willingness of these two leaders to serve one another. They were willing to perform menial, but essential, tasks like shovelling snow to prepare the way for people to hear about Christ. How about you? Are you willing to "shovel some snow?"

2011 M2M

Team Member Testimony

The weekend after Thanksgiving my husband, two daughters (10 & 12), I and nine AWESOME people from our church returned home from a mission trip to Mexico. We went to an orphanage for physically and mentally challenged children where we colored pictures, laughed, and played ball. (I think we all fell in love with them.

The second day we gave gifts to other sweet or-



phans and spent an afternoon with poverty stricken children. Played games, made crafts, told them about Jesus, while our men worked on the neighborhood church.

Our first night back in McKinney, my



daughter Ashley came out of her room and said, "It hard coming home, because we have so much . . ." Remembering the homes built of miscellaneous crates and pieces of metal - homes the size of our kitchen. We both cried. Lord, help us look for ways we can serve you as a family, because we have learned it is much more blessed to give than receive.

Lori Jennings

"How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"

(Romans 10:15-NIV)

FWB Summer Camps

No matter which camp you choose to attend, your young people will be blessed and grow a little closer to the Lord by meeting new friends at camp and spending night and day learning about Jesus. They'll be guided by leaders who have been called to teach, counsel and encourage young people; people who have answered the call and set aside time to study, pray, and find God's will for your child at camp this summer. All of our camps are reasonably priced and located across Texas for easy access. It's so very important for our youth to learn that they are part of a greater whole, a family of believers that goes beyond their own church.

West Fork Youth Camp

West Fork Youth Camp will be held June 18-22 this year at the campgrounds in Vashti, Tx. Richard Terry will serve as director, and Dick Terry will serve as evangelist. Cost is \$85 if registered on or before June 4, and \$100 after that date. Registration forms can be obtained by emailing me at this email address: bwaller2010@hotmail.com

East Texas Camp

The theme this year is "*No Other Name.*" This camp is the last full week in June this year, June 24th – 29th.

Camp Sonshine

Located in the beautiful country just outside the Sam Houston National Forest, Camp Sonshine offers young campers a chance to experience God in the country life. The theme for the girls' camp is "Awaken!" (June 17-22) and the boys will be studying about "Building a Strong Foundation" from June 24-29. The girls' evangelist will be Bethany Lopez (Robert Posner's daughter) from Collin Creek FWB Church. Camp directors are Sally Wilcox for the girls and Chuck Topping from Eastside FWB, for the boys.

The New Believer's Guide for FWB



The Free Will Baptist denomination has a rich history as a part of the body of Christ. As you continue to make disciples, we're excited to introduce you

to a vital resource for a new believers or new members class!

The Free Will Baptist Guide for New Believers is the newest release from Randall House. It will establish a solid foundation of faith and knowledge in your church on the basics of Free Will Baptist history, practice, and doctrine.

Buy 24 for \$8.99/each. Or, get one copy for \$10.99. Order at RandallHouse.com, or order by calling 800-877-7030.

Over a dozen respected leaders among Free Will Baptists contributed their knowledge and experience to this book, giving biblical and practical ways for new believers or members to develop a vibrant relationship with Christ.

Authors include:

Melvin Worthington	Paul Harrison
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Tommy Swindol	Tim Stout
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Dale Burden	Kevin Riggs
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Also, download the FREE online leader's guide PDF.

Thank you, and God bless you as you serve Him by serving Free Will Baptists.

114 Bush Road Nashville, TN 37217

Bud & Ruth Bivens...still on the road!

Ruth is helping John and Paulina at the children's home. Bud is in Pharr, to see his eye doctor. He plans to return to the children's home ASAP. First of June he will go back to IBLAC to finish construction on duplex and attend the graduation. This is a brief resume of what is below. If you have time to read it, dive in. If not, Please keep us in your prayers because the violence between the drug cartels in Mexico continues and he is at great risk travelling back and forth, as is anyone who ventures away from home.

I send you warmest greetings from The Getsemani Children's Home in Morelos, Coahuila. We came up on the 27th to meet the folks from Oklahoma who delivered the treasure from our Food Drive. And, we stayed to lend a hand to John and Paulina for a while. We are more or less installed in House #4 with the older boys. There are three, and our job is mainly to just see that they tend to their daily responsibilities. They are in charge of getting themselves up and off to school; then each has a job in the house maintaining it clean.

Bud enjoys driving the smaller kiddos to school and picking them up. He tends to give them some money to spend, or some kind of treat, but, don't tell Paulina. He is spoiling them, but, that is a grand-father's job, right? He helps some with the lunches, and tries to keep some kind of cake or cookies on the menu. He had to go back to Pharr on Tuesday for his annual appointment with eye doctor. The children ask me a dozen times a day when he will be coming back.

I had just turned on my lap top with the hope of getting something written when my phone rang again. It was Paulina calling from the Kindergarten program. She needed me to pick up the children from the Primary School. So, with just three or four sentences written away I went with Jose, one of the older boys (who didn't go to school today because he over slept). He served as my guide, and we finally had to call Paulina to get directions to the right school. But, we made it, picked up a car load of wiggling, giggling kiddos, and got back to the Home safely. Paulina, quickly sent me to clean out all of the left overs out of our fridge, she put them all together, and is dishing up lunch as I write.

So, now you know where we are and what is going on. Bud will be back this weekend and stay for a while. Then he is off again to IBLAC to get the duplex finished and attend a graduation. Our two Seniors Valentin & Luci graduate on the 9th. Then, he has been named the Godfather of the Cake by a little boy who will be graduating from 6th grade the 29th on the island. That means that he has to bring the cake for Jose's family.

While he is there I will be staying here. It is certainly more fun than being at the house in Pharr alone. With the on-going violence and danger to travellers, he just does not want me to take the risk of the long bus ride-not with him, nor alone. So, here I am.

Please keep us in your prayers. As Bud winds up his construction there at IBLAC, we are no longer needed on the staff there, and, so badly needed here. Pray for young men and women to listen to the Lord's calling to prepare for the ministry. There is such a shortage of pastors and the fields of Mexico are white, waiting for the harvest. Many of our current pastors are elderly, although, like us, don't like to admit it. How much longer will we all have to serve? We are all going to need replacements. Pray for the Lord to use us wherever we are, and make us a blessing to those around us, every day. God bless you as you labor in your mission field. Ruth Bivens

Make me a blessing to someone today.

A note from Sally...

We want to welcome our newest local WAC at Lakehills FWB in Austin! Lakehills women are very active and have a large group of women who meet monthly with President Marsha Hood. We are so very pleased that they have decided to become official members of our WAC family. Pray for them as they get started.

The 2012 State Convention is upon us! The TWAC will be serving dinner to all who come on Wednesday evening at 6:00 PM. No charge! Send RSVP's to the church phone 903/657-5763 or Bro. Mark's email – markalope@suddenlink.net by May 30th!! Everyone is welcome!!! If you forget to RSVP, come anyway!

Don't miss the morning meetings for the TWAC! We'll be "building the body" of Christ together as only Christian women can. Come prepared to participate. Come in a spirit of holiness. Come, let us humble ourselves before our God. And pray!

Elizabeth Hodges, our Executive Director, will be speaking at our Joint Session at 11:00 AM Thursday, June 14th.

The Carthage FWB Singers will be leading our worship and Ashton Hood will be singing a special.

All of this will be at First FWB Church in Henderson. The pastor there is Mark Headrick. The church phone number is 903-657-5763.

What is the WAC?

We are women. Designed by God the Creator, we accept our womanhood as a gift that enables us to bring honor and glory to Him. As women we recognize our need for relationships, not only with Christ, but also with other women. In the spirit of Titus 2, we seek to minister – women encouraging women to be all God wants us to be in our homes, our churches, our communities and throughout the world. Membership dues and our prayers reach around the world!

We are a network of Free Will Baptist women's ministries. Large church and small church groups unite together in worldwide ministry efforts, challenging both individuals and local groups to see beyond themselves. Women regularly connect through regional, statewide and national events.

We are actively involved in ministry at every level. Our focus includes prayer, Bible study, missions and service. From local benevolence, community outreach, educational funding, missionary support, to international women's conferences and missions trips, our ministry is far-reaching and diverse.

We are committed to helping women know Christ and make Him known. Christ's last words on earth commanded believers to go and make disciples of all nations, teaching them to observe all His commands. We base our purpose statement on this mandate. Recognizing that global evangelism begins within our own sphere of influence, we make this our goal: to help each woman find and fulfill her God-designed role in the Great Commission.

Central District Retreat

The First FWB Church in Tomball opened their doors and their hearts to all the ladies with a Spring Tea Time Retreat. The theme was "A Wise Woman Builds" We met from 9 AM to 3 PM. No charge!

Ladies were invited to share how a "wise woman" builds her church, home and W.A.C.

A time of fellowship, craft (a recipe book in the shape of a teapot with recipes provided of the treats we shared) and a prayer walk around the lake were part of the activities for the day.

A continental breakfast along with a scrumptious lunch was served and as a special treat for all, some delectable tea time treats prepared by Tomball WAC officers.

To say we enjoyed it is putting it mildly. Seeing friends from other local churches who we don't get to see so often is always a loving time. Thank you, Tomball WAC. You really shine for Jesus!



The Provision Closet

From one suitcase of linens in 1962 to a present storehouse of over a quarter million dollars' net worth of goods, the closet stands as an amazing display of God's good gifts and His people's generosity. Please consider what your group can do to make available all our missionaries' needs.

Rotating Preachers

by Mark Headrick

What do you do when you have a handful of preachers without pulpits, and you have a handful of pulpits without preachers? Put them together, of course! Not since Reese's decided to mix chocolate and peanut butter has East Texas seen such a revolutionary combination!

For some time, three of the ten churches of the East Texas District Association had been without pastors. Lifegate was getting by the best it could, Nacogdoches was only meeting for Sunday school, and Stewart had turned out the lights, unsure of what step to take next. It was a shame to see this happening in our district, and I could not shake the burden I was feeling. The purpose of our district association is to promote unity and fellowship among our churches. How could we turn a blind eye to what was going on in our own backyard? I began praying to God for direction and wisdom on how we could bless our sister churches.

Meanwhile, several men had answered the call to preach in the last couple years. Add them to the retired ministers in the area, and we had a pretty decent pulpit supply. Unfortunately, opportunities for these new preachers to hone their skills and grow in the ministry were few and far between. One might ask why these three churches didn't just call one of these men to be their pastor. Perhaps these men weren't ready to pastor a church just yet. Maybe they still needed longer than a week to prepare a sermon.

Then it hit me. What if we sent these men to the three pastorless churches on a rotational basis. None of them would be solely responsible for the watchcare of the members. They would not have to preach every Sunday, so they would have more time to prepare, and they would still be able to grow under the leadership of their own pastor. With the grateful consent of the churches, and the zealous cooperation of the preachers, a schedule was drafted.

At the same time, Rev. David Rudd and the people of Good Hope were feeling a similar burden for the plight of our churches, and they entered into talks with Lifegate to come alongside and help. Rev. Don Ellis agreed to serve as interim pastor while Good Hope would provide assistance with outreach and member care. With Lifegate in good hands, this left Stewart and Nacogdoches to be encouraged. Now, since April, these churches have been able to worship every Sunday and be blessed with good biblical preaching. The men who are giving their time and gifts to serve are Randy Bryan, John Collier, Jimmy Pyers, and Wade Rector. Praise God for these men.

Remember, our associations exist to provide support and encouragement for one another. It is not good for a church to feel isolated in the kingdom. Have you reached out and blessed one of your sister churches lately?



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