

Volume 47, Number 7, July-August 1977

**Free Will Baptist**

# GEM

**"Voice Of Missouri Free Will Baptists"**



# Sunday School Attendance Averages 1976-77

CHURCH	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May
Bethel	100	99	107	106		114	110	92	116		111	103
Byrd						37		23	44			
Calvary, Conway				129	118	111	114	56	116	131	147	135
Coppermines	83	85	95	84	73	74						
Cuba	105	116	105		121	97	95	67	94	62	74	
DeSoto	140	143	152	145	165	161						
Farmington	329		385	366	402	338	348	314	360	393	386	369
First K.C.	28		19	23	30	32		24	23	18	23	18
Fourth	164	108	135	148	172	158						
Grant Ave.	113	121	103	127	134		119	101	126			
Jones Chapel			101									
Leadington	68	67	69	74	74	78	79	50	77			
Lebanon, First	164	143	137	152	152	154	134	91	139	148	142	132
Myrtle										60	69	
Richwoods	31	30	33	35	32	41	32	27	37	39	47	43
South Side	152	149	168									
Thayer	167		181									
Trinity	197	163	199	219	222	218	220	206	215	224	231	201
Twin Oaks	89	82	96	101	103	95	98	73	95	105	109	92
Willow Springs	116	133	118	115	120	117		88	125			113

All items for publication must be in the hands of the editor *no later than the 15th of the month* preceding the issue month.

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Clarence Burton, editor

Address all correspondence relating to the GEM, including subscription and mailing information to the above address.

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The sermons and articles published in the GEM represent the personal views of the authors and not necessarily the views and policies of the Missouri State Association of Free Will Baptists or of the editor.

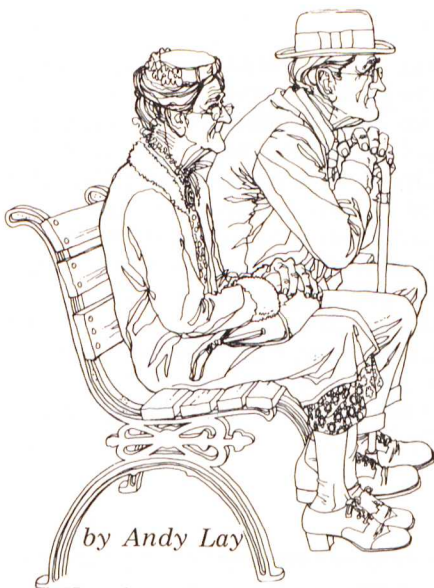
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# To Have Or Not To Have A Retirement Center/Nursing Home

"You have been accepted into the Missouri State Retirement Center/Nursing Home," the letter said. The hearts of the elderly couple were made glad as they began to prepare to sell their home and move into one of the retirement center's apartments. As their health had gradually deteriorated they realized that they were no longer able to take care of the house and yard. They had already sold their car. The years of labor they had spent in their beloved Free Will Baptist church were being rewarded. They were thankful their denomination had faced the need that they and other senior citizens have—a place to spend their sunset years in comfort with adequate care, surrounded by fellow Free Will Baptists.

In the retirement center they would be furnished one hot meal per day. A registered nurse would see to their health needs regularly. There would be no grass to cut, walks to shovel, trim to paint, furnace to repair, and no house insurance men to deal with. There is a large lounge area, a library, hobby shops, gardening, and shuffleboard at the retirement center for those who want them.

The center would provide transportation to and from the nearby shopping center weekly, and it would provide recreational trips occasionally. Exercise and fellowship would be planned daily in the spacious recreation area. A Free Will Baptist minister would conduct services Sunday morning, Sunday night, and Wednesday night, just like back home. Best of all, Christian love and concern would permeate the atmosphere at the center.

This couple had been especially attracted to the Free Will Baptist Retirement Center because a 60 bed nursing home adjoined the apartment building. A part of their contract stated that if either of them needed nursing home care they were guaranteed a bed in the nursing section where they would be within walking distance of their apartment home.

They had bought into the retirement center with \$20,000 from their savings. That guaranteed them an apartment as long as either of them needed it. If they lived less than eight years, a prorated portion of the initial investment would be refunded to their estate. In addition to the initial investment, they paid a monthly service charge of \$300 which included the cost for their utilities, the one meal per day, the routine nursing care, some house cleaning, laundry, etc.

If either of them needed the nursing home care they would be charged \$600 per month, a rate comparable to similar care elsewhere.

Oh yes, there was some sadness as they began to discard the items they could not take with them to the apartment, but there was joy also in anticipating living next door to their lifelong friends from down at the church. They were also looking forward to having a part in the ministry of the retirement center—the prayer chain that was so vital to the denomination, the missionary band that remembered all the missionaries on their birthdays, the correspondence corner that helped more feeble members of the retirement community stay in contact with their friends and acquaintances.

\* \* \* \* \*

Is this little page in the life of this elderly couple just a dream? Yes, it is just a dream now, for Free Will Baptists do not have such a retirement center. But this is a dream that could come true—IF enough people want it to.

For the past three years Missouri State Association has been investigating the possibility of constructing and operating a retirement center and/or nursing home. The committee currently working on the project favors the construction of a 60/60 complex if the project is to be undertaken at all. That would mean sixty retirement apartments and a sixty bed nursing home in one complex.

The charges listed and services mentioned in the above article are "ball park" figures suggested by a consulting firm familiar with such institutions. They are realistic today, but they would obviously increase with time and inflation, and could vary according to the details of the contract when actually negotiated.

The initial cost of such a project would exceed \$2 million, but could be undertaken by the state association for only a few thousand dollars, with the bulk of the down money coming from the entrance fees of approximately \$20,000 each paid by the building's future residents. The balance of the initial cost would be amortized by a loan paid back from the tenants' monthly service charges.

The big questions are: Is there enough demand for such a project within our ranks? Would enough



people use such a facility to make it pay? Do we have enough people who could afford this type of service? Frankly, that is why this article is being written: to try to learn the extent of our people's need in the State of Missouri. If that is to be accomplished, it will be necessary for EVERY INTERESTED PERSON who reads this article to fill out the form below and express to the committee your opinions.

One more thing: A major barrier to our committee's being able to obtain the information we need is the uncertainty of the location of such a facility if and when it is constructed. Many people would be very interested if it were being built in

their hometown, but they would be quite disinterested if it were to be built across the state from where they live. Since we do not have any idea at this point where such a facility would be needed most, you could help us best by assuming that it would be constructed within a reasonable distance of your home. If you express an interest, we will assume that you want it close to your home and that your interest will probably decrease the farther away the facility would be located.

If this project interests you, PLEASE fill out the questionnaire below and mail it to Andy Lay, 13 Tanglewood Drive, Carl Junction, MO 64834. It is needed by August 15, 1977.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Street or Route \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ I am ☐ I am not a Free Will Baptist

My pastor's name is \_\_\_\_\_

I am a member of \_\_\_\_\_ Church.

☐ Please put me on your mailing list and keep me informed of the status of this project. I am interested in such a facility: ☐ for myself, ☐ for a friend or relative. If for a friend or relative, give their name and address. \_\_\_\_\_

☐ I would be interested in the Nursing Home but not the Retirement Center.

☐ I would be interested in the Retirement Center but not the Nursing Home.

☐ I am interested regardless of where the center is located.

# MINISTERS- LAYMEN RETREAT

September 19-21, 1977 (Noon Monday to noon Wednesday)

At Free Will Baptist State Youth Camp near Niangua, MO

Speaker: DR. JOHN BROGER

Subject: COUNSELING ALL HUMAN NEEDS WITH THE BIBLE

Cost: \$20 per individual or \$30 for married couple. Includes room, board, tuition, insurance, and some printed material.

A free copy of *Christian Living in the Home* by Jay Adams will be given for pre-registration by September 10: send to Dennis Bowman, 1932 Belmont, Independence, MO 64057.

If possible read *Competent to Counsel* by Jay Adams before the seminar.

(Sponsored by the State Board of Christian Education)



## **CHURCHES PEOPLE AND EVENTS**

### **Community Free Will Baptist Church Shares Blessings**

Mrs. Louise Strauser, church reporter, writes: "We would like to share with others what the Lord is doing for us in Potosi. As of May 30 the drilling of the well was completed and we now have an abundant supply of water in the church. Also, the church paid, in cash, the needed amount of \$1,300.

"May 30, 1977 was also significant in that we celebrated our pastor's, Rev. Don Strauser first anniversary with the church. The pastor commented on his first anniversary that the work of the church could be likened to the story of the tortoise and the hare. The tortoise did not move very fast but it got there. The church may not be moving fast but it is doing the job.

"The church desires the prayers of the people in Missouri that they will serve as an effective witness for the Lord in that area."



### **Brother Dalie Passes**

On April 8, 1977, Brother Dalie Schulte was called home to be with the Lord. He was seventy years of age. He and his wife united with the Richwoods Church in 1952. Brother Dalie, as he was affectionately known, served as a deacon for several years. His death was preceded by a lingering illness.

The pastor, Rev. Elvis Reed, states that Brother Schulte will be missed by the church and the people of the community. He and Mrs. Schulte, Elsie, were loved and respected by all people.

### **Blessings at Twin Oaks**

Madeline McFarland, church reporter, of the Twin Oaks Free Will Baptist Church writes: "We are happy to report good attendance in all our services. The Lord is blessing with souls being saved and several dedicating themselves to a deeper commitment to the Lord.

"We are thankful for the youth of the church. They are not only the church of the future but they are a part of the church today.

"The CTS attendance is increasing and the mid-week prayer services are always enjoyable with the pastor teaching from the Book of Revelation. The visitation program is working very well with people going out every week. We are seeing results of our visitation. The Lord is blessing with the people giving to Him their tithes and offerings. The financial needs of the church are being met. The

Christian should know that he cannot outgive the Lord.

"We regret that Brother Raymond Michael and his family are leaving us to begin the work as pastor of the Union Light Church. But we are glad to see them go where the Lord wants them to go and serve where He wants them to serve. We will miss them at Twin Oaks. We know that Gary will do well as our new Sunday school superintendent.

"The Lord has been good to us at Twin Oaks. We have a fine group of people, a fine pastor, and, oh yes, three fine musicians."



Rev. & Mrs. Jack  
Dimwiddle

Mr. & Mrs.  
Michael Dimwiddle  
and Mr. & Mrs.  
Roy Hendrix.



### **Ordination Service At Liberty Association**

The Liberty Association held an Ordination Service at the last annual session, June 4, 1977. Rev. Jack Dimwiddle was ordained to preach the gospel. Brother Michael Dimwiddle and Brother Roy Hendrix were ordained to serve as deacons. The Ordaining Council along with the ordained of the association "laid hands" on these men and their wives dedicating and setting them apart to serve the Lord as He has called them.

### **Pastoral Changes**

Rev. Steve Burton to First Church, Salem, Missouri.

### **Church Personnel Changes**

Rev. Keith Tallent, Youth Pastor, First Church, Farmington, Missouri

Rev. Gene Wilfong, Principal, Farmington Christian Academy, First Church, Farmington, Missouri

Rev. Mike Creech, Youth Pastor, Fellowship Church, Flat River, Missouri

### **Mrs. Ruth Caldwell Promoted To Glory**

On June 4, 1977, Mrs. Ruth Caldwell was called home to be with the Lord. She was born May 29, 1925. She was survived by her husband Warren; two daughters, Linda Hackworth and Debbie Keating; one son, Larry; three sisters, Elvie Campbell, Ada Janes, Delphia Wisehart; four brothers, Elza, Noah, Duck, and Leonard. Ruth made profession of faith in Christ at an early age and lived a dedicated Christian life. She was a member of the First Free Will Baptist Church of Berkeley, Missouri. A verse of Scripture that was very meaningful to her and characterized her life was, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." She was loved by both family and friends.

The memorial service was held at the Carter Home Chapel in Thayer, Missouri. Reverend Clarence Burton and Rev. Bill Van Winkle had the service.





## Points for Pastors

by Jim McAllister

In pastoral preaching these are several matters that are of great importance:

**THE TEXT:** The text is that out of which the sermon is woven. It is the basis for the sermon or message. Don't be like the preacher who "took a text and preached from it." Preach the text. The text awakens the interest of the audience; it gains the confidence of the congregation; it gives the pastor authority and boldness in proclaiming the message; it will prevent the pastor's mind from wandering; and it will keep the preacher biblical.

Phillip Brooks said, "The ease and facility with which a text is chosen depends on two things: The preacher's own mind and the idea of a sermon." If your heart is cold, your mind dry of thought, and you have not lived in the Word, then choosing a text will be extremely difficult. Wendell Nance said, "Choose your text by studying the needs of your people." But be sure you are capable to deal with the text. Don't get over your head in subjects where you are not familiar.

**THE SUBJECT:** You must *know* your subject thoroughly and be sure it is one that is familiar to your congregation. Be sure it is suitable to time, place, and occasion. Make sure your theme or subject is an important one. Always have a definite aim in mind when you select your subject.

**COLLECTING SERMON MATERIAL:** Where do you find material for your message? You better not make a practice of getting your sermons from "Preacher's Goldmine," or "Sword of the Lord." Study your Bible regularly. Study your own personal experiences and the experiences of others. Songs, sign boards along the road, and many other things can provoke a thought for a sermon. Keep records. You won't remember so jot it down.

Preaching is *the main business* of the pastor. He must be good at it. We have been told that "visiting, organizing, administration, soul winning, praying, and loving people are the important things of the ministry." Not so! Laymen can do these other things. Though you *are* to do all these things and do them well, you are *first* a *preacher*. Preach well, preach excitingly, preach interestingly, preach emotionally, preach scripturally, **PREACH!**

## REPORT ON THE MISSOURI STATE ASSOCIATION

by editor Clarence Burton

"Let's stand and sing," said the music director Ted Wilbanks. We stood and we sang! Following the song, Clarence Burton led the congregation in prayer; the clerk Tom Owens declared the association in session and the sixty-fourth session of the Missouri State Association of Free Will Baptists had begun.

The first service, as well as the others, was a blessing. The moderator, Brother Bill Evans, gave a clear and challenging message. This laid the foundation for the services to follow. The Jones Family was used of God to bless with special music and Evangelist Stanley Jones struck a solid note with the keynote message—Evangelize.

The theme, "That My House May Be Filled," was well developed by the messages that followed. Pastor Lawrence Thompson preached with conviction that we must—Enlist. Missionary Bobby Poole left no doubt that the local church must reach out to the uttermost part of the world. The church is commissioned to—Expand. Pastor Don Lombard put it all together with the last message—Establish.

The devotionals delivered by Brothers Jim Mertz, Bob Dickey, and Bob Sharry were used of God to add to the spiritual food. The ones that presided at the worship services did their jobs well—Brothers O. D. Matthews, Glynn Campbell, and Earl Ames.

The meeting is now history but the influence and impact will remain. Surely there will be a greater effort to win more people to Christ. With an increase in the budgets there will need to be, and I believe there will be, an increase in our giving.

There were some items adopted that were of special interest. The Resolution Committee report is carried in this issue of the *Gem*. (This was directed by the Missouri State Association.) The committee to explore the possibility of a Senior Citizens Home will be making an extensive study this year. They will endeavor to determine what the people in Missouri want to do.

As a special note of interest the Sunday school and CTS Board conducted a great service on Monday evening. The Harvesters from Hillsdale Free Will Baptist College presented special music and President Bill Jones delivered a challenging message. Awards were presented relative to the state competitive activities and statewide Sunday school contest.

The Lord is blessing His work throughout our state. He will surely continue to do so as we preach the Word and practice what we preach.

A great big thanks is extended to the host pastor, his wife, his church staff, and the ministers and laity throughout the Springfield area. The Lord blessed with a wonderful state association and we are surely very grateful.

Let us trust the Lord for a great and wonderful year! We must pray, labor, and continue to work together. As we do this, the Lord will give to us the desires of our hearts.





Bill Evans, moderator



Jim McAllister & Ginny Farmington Church was No. 1 in Cooperative and Designated giving



Virgil and Blanche Looking at Auxiliary report



Lawrence Thompson after the message



Bobby Poole, preaching



Don Lombard, preaching

# Missouri State Association



Ted Wilbanks Grant Avenue Choir

The Smiths and Murray Southwell



Home Missions Award

**Editors note:** Other photos were snapped but did not develop.

The Ushers





## MISSOURI STATE HOME MISSIONS GIVING MAY 5 through JUNE 5, 1977

Olivet	\$ 225.00
Hannon	114.00
Berkeley	35.00
DeSoto	100.00
Myrtle	61.37
Oak Hill	58.65
Grace	25.00
Rock Chapel	75.00
South Fremont	93.00
Lebanon, First	350.00
Houston	97.60
Missouri State Woman's Aux.	94.78
Cape Girardeau	9.63
Purdy	7.00
Fourth	24.45
Sedalia	25.69
West Plains	70.00
Victory	78.00
Berean	20.00
Fellowship	23.00
Bethel	10.00
Thayer	47.00
Mountain Grove	2.50
Hazel Creek	10.00
Cooperative Receipts	1,983.09
Total	\$3,639.76

Secretary-Treasurer  
Rev. Lawrence Thompson  
3416 N. Bellefontaine  
Kansas City, Mo. 64117

## COOPERATIVE DISBURSEMENTS May 1977

20.00% Missouri State Home Missions	\$1,983.09
16.25% Promotional Department	1,611.25
4.00% General Fund	396.61
5.50% Youth Camp	545.35
2.50% GEM	247.88
1.75% Sunday School & CTS	173.52
2.00% MBI	198.31
52%	5,156.01
7.00% Hillsdale College	694.09
13.00% Foreign Missions	1,289.01
9.00% Free Will Baptist Bible College	892.39
7.00% Executive Department	694.08
6.50% National Home Missions	644.51
2.50% CTS	247.88
2.50% Retirement & Insurance	247.88
.25% Layman's Board	24.78
.25% Theological Commission	24.78
41%	4,065.31
Total Disbursements	\$9,915.41

Let us thank the Lord for another fine month.

## COOPERATIVE RECEIPTS May 1977

Grace	\$622.00
Berkeley	478.37
Pleasant Ridge	26.65
Kirkville	30.00
Purdy	85.00
Berean	44.70
Bethel	313.00
Malden	70.13
O'Fallon	49.86
Beacon	289.46
Cabool	186.71
Mill Creek Church	45.34
Mill Creek SS	27.50
First Mission, Kansas City	85.07
Hartville	35.75

Hurryville	87.00
Poplar Bluff	5.20
Verdella	127.90
Hannon	114.00
Cuba	153.27
Viburnum	30.00
New Harmony SS	5.60
Rock Chapel	20.85
Olivet	175.00
Community	29.22
Farmington, First	1,506.55
New Prospect	13.22
Merl's Chapel	60.16
Joplin	185.46
Marshfield	91.04
Calvary Fellowship	317.99
Coppermines	120.00
Thayer	140.18
Happy Home	32.72
Poplar Bluff	4.70
Fourth	315.00
Parkview	50.00
Leadington	213.28
Buffalo	90.93
Jones Chapel	442.80
Houston	103.63
Poplar Bluff	5.70
El Dorado, First	5.00
Oskaloosa	28.48
Viburnum	15.00
Lebanon, First	388.00
Cope	21.19
Calvary, Conway	435.00
Pleasant Ridge	26.73
Mt. Pisgah	50.00
Poplar Bluff	13.00
South Side	300.95
Willow Springs	177.38
Cape Girardeau	195.58
Mountain Grove, First	419.05
Bethel	363.00
Purdy	90.36
Alton	76.33
Houston	196.88
Monett, First	282.54
Total Cooperative Receipts	\$9,915.41

## MISSOURI DESIGNATED GIVING May 1977

### FOREIGN MISSIONS

Kirkville	\$110.98
Jerry Pinkerton	\$39.00
Howard Filkins	71.98
Bethel	\$25.86
Jerry Pinkerton	\$25.86
New Harmony	\$37.94
Dr. Laverne Miley	\$18.97
Jim McLain	18.97
Olivet	\$117.00
Mabel Willey	\$20.00
Jerry Pinkerton	20.00
Howard Filkins	5.00
Lonnie Sparks	5.00
Lynn Miley	10.00
Bobby Poole	52.00
Jim McLain	5.00
Walnut Grove	\$10.00
Lynn Miley	\$10.00
Lebanon, First	\$110.00
Lonnie Sparks	\$10.00
Clint Morgan	50.00
Jerry Pinkerton	50.00
Thayer	\$45.00
Jerry Pinkerton	\$38.00
Dale Bishop	5.00
Howard Filkins	2.00
South Side	\$104.00
Charlotte Tallent	\$19.00



Lonnie Palmer .....	85.00	
Mountain Grove, First .....	\$145.00	
Call-a-Thon .....	\$100.00	
General Fund .....	45.00	
Bethel .....	\$22.00	
Jerry Pinkerton .....	\$12.00	
S. Wilkinson .....	10.00	
Black Oak .....	\$29.00	
Jim McLain .....	\$29.00	
Walnut Grove .....	\$25.00	
Jerry Pinkerton .....	\$25.00	
Total .....	\$781.78	
<b>MISSOURI STATE HOME MISSIONS</b>		
Bethel .....	\$15.00	
Dale Smith .....	\$5.00	
Perpetual Loan .....	10.00	
Thayer .....	\$47.00	
Poplar Bluff .....	\$27.00	
General Fund .....	20.00	
Mountain Grove, First .....	\$2.50	
General Fund .....	\$2.50	
Hazel Creek .....	\$10.00	
General Fund .....	\$10.00	
Bethel .....	\$15.00	
Dale Smith .....	\$5.00	
Perpetual Loan .....	10.00	
Total .....	\$89.50	

<b>NATIONAL HOME MISSIONS</b>		
Olivet .....	\$130.00	
Leland Horton .....	\$30.00	
Mark Vandivort .....	100.00	
Phyllis Virtue .....	\$10.00	
Mark Vandivort .....	\$10.00	
South Side .....	\$626.27	
Bob Francis .....	\$619.27	
Mark Vandivort .....	7.00	
Mountain Grove, First .....	\$66.50	
Leland Horton .....	\$20.00	
General Fund .....	2.50	
Mark Vandivort .....	44.00	
Bethel .....	\$15.35	
Vergel Maness .....	\$15.35	
Total .....	\$848.12	
<b>HILLSDALE FREE WILL BAPTIST COLLEGE</b>		
Mountain Grove, First .....	\$40.00	
<b>FREE WILL BAPTIST BIBLE COLLEGE</b>		
Mountain Grove, First .....	\$5.40	
<b>MISSOURI STATE YOUTH CAMP</b>		
Thayer .....	\$10.00	
Olivet .....	10.00	
Total .....	\$20.00	

# Promotional Secretary's Corner

by Clarence Burton

A Bible was given to me sometime ago with this challenging poem in it.

Give us a watchword for the hour,  
A thrilling word, a word of power;  
A battle cry, a flaming breath,  
A call to conquest, or to death;

A word to rouse the church from rest,  
To heed the Master's high behest.  
The call is given, ye hosts arise,  
The watchword is Evangelize!

This is surely the desire of every Christian—evangelize! May we let the Lord work through us as He makes us soul winners in His service.

The Lord is giving Free Will Baptists many opportunities. Sometimes we bemoan the age in which we live and allow self-pity to control our emotions. We say, Oh, that I could have lived fifty years ago. It would have been easier to live a Christian life; it would have been easier to preach and witness for Jesus." Would it? Every age has its problems. Let us recognize this—we are living today! If Daniel could live for God, and he did; if Enoch could live for God, and he did, why can't we? We can. Let's live for Jesus. God's grace is sufficient for

every age, for every problem, for every temptation. Then let us use every available means that can be used to communicate the gospel.

May was another fine month. Because of needed space I will list without comment the places I visited.

Sunday, May 1	Aulsbury Chapel Rev. Earl Ames, pastor
Saturday, May 7	Mission Association Rev. Lynn Wood, moderator
Sunday, May 8	Belton Church Rev. Bill Christensen, pastor
Saturday, May 14	Niangua Association Rev. Frank Linton, moderator Rev. Len Gardner, moderator
Sunday, May 15	New Home Rev. I. L. Florence, pastor
Sunday-Tuesday May 22-24	Sunday School Board Meeting Nashville, Tennessee
Sunday, May 29	Central Western 5th Sunday Meeting Brother Smith, moderator Wolf Creek R. E. Helsey, pastor

Let's remember—cooperative giving supports every phase of the Lord's work in our denomination. May the Lord bless the faithfulness of those sharing in this unified plan. If your church is not supporting this, please give it some prayerful consideration. This plan is appropriate for every church and every church can share in the ministries supported by it.

Please make all checks payable to and mail to Missouri State Association P. O. Box 991, Lebanon, Missouri 65536.





Faith VanWinkle—Bible Memorization



Brent Sperry—Declamation



Kim Barnette—Sword Drill



L-R Angie Harlamert, Cathy Harper, Lisa Hutsell, Marta Eaton, David Reynolds—Solos



Willow Springs Chorale



Joplin Girls Ensemble



Monett Youth Choir

# Missouri State Music And Art Competitive Winners

## *CATEGORY ONE—VOCAL SOLO*

Junior Adventurer—Lisa Hutsell, First Free Will Baptist, Mountain Grove

Herald—David Reynolds, First Free Will Baptist, Joplin

Crusader—Angela Harlamert, Grant Avenue Free Will Baptist, Springfield

## *CATEGORY TWO—VOCAL ENSEMBLE*

Joplin Girls Ensemble, First Free Will Baptist, Joplin

## *CATEGORY THREE—CHOIR (CHORALE)*

Willow Springs Chorale, Willow Springs Free Will Baptist, Mountain Grove

## *CATEGORY THREE—CHOIR (YOUTH CHOIR)*

Monett Youth Choir, First Free Will Baptist, Monett

## *CATEGORY FOUR—INSTRUMENTAL*

## *SOLO (OTHER THAN KEYBOARD)*

Herald—David Reynolds, First Free Will Baptist, Joplin

Crusader—Crisite Ice, New Life Free Will Baptist Church, Licking

## *CATEGORY SIX—KEYBOARD*

Herald—Marta Eaton, First Free Will Baptist, Joplin

Crusader—Cathy Harper, Thayer Free Will Baptist, Thayer

Bible Memorization—Faith Van Winkle, Berkeley Church, first place

Bible Bowl—First Church Mountain Grove, first place

Bible Tic Tac Toe—First Church Mountain Grove, first place

Pictures not available for Bible Bowl and Bible Tic Tac Toe



## BACKYARD BIBLE SCHOOL Is It Worth The Trouble?

by Linda Walls



If your neighborhood is anything like mine, all the children are anxious for school to be out. After school is out a few weeks, however, the “I don’t have anything to do” syndrome sets in. Most of the neighborhood children eventually end up in my backyard to play with my small children and their swing set. Last summer I decided that, with the Lord’s help, I could give them something to do that would be worthwhile for at least one hour a week. We could have a backyard Bible school with Bible stories, songs, games, crafts, and refreshments. For some, refreshments seemed to be the reason for coming the first time. I knew it would take extra work, time and preparation, a little extra money, and at some times inconvenience, but I was soon to find out that the blessings outnumbered the trouble many times over.

I began by asking the Lord’s help; then I sat down and made some plans. First, I decided to limit the ages to five through eight-year olds, keeping my fingers crossed that my youngest, age three, would like it well enough to fit in with the group. Then I made a sign for my backyard gate and flyers to hand out in the neighborhood. Two neighborhood children went with us and pointed out the houses where children lived. This saves us many hours in the early summer heat. I wrote down the names and phone numbers of all the prospects and called them the day before our first class. To my surprise, I had ten prospects (all girls). My five-year-old son would be the only boy. This didn’t turn out to be a problem, however, as he got them to play baseball with him after almost every class.

The morning of the first class arrived, bright and sunny, and the children started arriving 45 minutes early. I rushed my children through breakfast and got things ready. I propped my flannel board up against the house and taped some teaching pictures to the house. I had gone through my files and collected all the visual aids possible. I knew most of the children did not attend Sunday school and I would have to keep things interesting or they wouldn’t come back. We started with action songs and prayer; then we settled down for a Bible story about the creation. The backyard was a perfect place for teaching about the beautiful things that God has made. Birds were singing, and a squirrel and a rabbit both made an appearance before class was over. Some of the children sat wide-eyed with wonder and from their questions I knew that this had probably been the first time they had heard this wonderful story. Time and time again I would have to remind them that the stories we had in backyard Bible school came from the Bible and were all true. Craft time, game time, and refreshments always were favorite times. If one of the children had to

miss a class, he usually came and picked up his papers the next day and asked about the story.

After class was over I sat back with tears in my eyes. So many wonderful things to know about Jesus and yet some of the children seemingly knew nothing. My goal for the summer was to teach them that God loved them! If they would just learn that much, what a happier group of children they would be. Many of them came from broken homes and had very little love shown to them at home. I prayed that God would use me to show His love to them.

Our second class went much like the first, with children arriving early and staying late. I found when lunchtime came, I had to ask them to leave so my children could eat. Many times they would come back in the afternoon. Our second week I also noticed a couple of junior age girls sitting around the corner of the house waiting for their younger sisters. They were close enough to hear, but they didn’t want to be seen. I asked them if they would like to help me. That was met with great enthusiasm and they even invited another friend to help. I realized they were just as starved for love—God’s love—to be shown to them. They were very helpful. I left things for them to cut out and crafts to prepare during the Bible story. They worked quietly at the table beside the story circle and benefited from the story also. They helped the smaller children with pasting and cutting and they always seemed to have enough time to make something for themselves. I tried to gear the take-home papers and crafts to the parents needs also. I encouraged the children to explain the Scripture verses and stories to their parents, hoping to use the children as a way to reach their parents.

Our backyard turned into a place of constant sounds. Now, when the children would come over to play, they would almost always sing “church” songs and play “church” games. My children taught them new songs and the favorite game was playing backyard Bible school or church. Usually, I was called out to “help” with the songs and games and if not, I was listening from inside to make sure the one who was pretending to be the preacher or teacher was keeping the facts straight.

Sure, I got tired of being interrupted when I was trying to get housework done. I got tired of carrying drinks of water outside every little while. I am still tired of looking at bare spots in the grass where it has been worn down from constant little feet running over it. But these are very small inconveniences compared to the blessings the Lord has given me.

Two neighborhood children have started attending church with us regularly on Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings for children’s choir practice. They have also shown up a couple of evenings to hear us read a Bible story to our children. Others have been asking if we are going to start having backyard Bible school again.

Yes, I am planning to have backyard Bible school again this year. It is worth the trouble!

About the writer: Linda Walls is a housewife by natural love and a public school teacher by profession. She is the mother of two children and is a teacher in the primary department of Sunday school. Linda and Gary, her husband, are very active in the First Free Will Baptist Church of Berkeley.



## Woman's Page



*Shirley Bowden, editor*

### State Meeting News

At the recent Missouri Woman's Auxiliary Convention, June 7, 1977, the following officers were elected to serve for the next two years. Their names and addresses have been listed below for your convenience.

President, Helen McAllister  
305 W. Columbia  
Farmington, MO 63640

Vice-President, Jo Ann Wood  
P. O. Box 464  
Mountain Grove, MO 65711

Secretary, Shirley Bowden  
P. O. Box 991  
Lebanon, MO 65536

Treasurer, Blanche Wisehart  
Myrtle, MO 65778

Members at Large:  
Frances Bowman  
625 N. O'Dell  
Marshall, MO 65340

Hilda Nichols  
P. O. Box 262  
Viburnum, MO 65566

Jo Ann Thomas  
107 Dairy  
Monett, MO 65708

Field Worker, Brenda Evans  
1122 East 77th  
Kansas City, MO 64137

The following state projects were approved: (1) "Pinkertons on Wheels" with a goal of \$2,000, will be the State Foreign Missions Project. (2) "Francis' to the Field," with a goal of \$2,000, will be the National Home Missions Project. (3) State Home Mission Perpetual Loan Fund, with a goal of \$2,000, to be sent to the State Treasurer by March 15, 1978.

The Jerry Pinkerton Family are missionaries to the Ivory Coast, West Africa. The money raised by our state project will be used to help purchase a car. The Robert Francis Family are missionaries to St. Paul, Minnesota. The money raised for their project will go to their personal account, enabling them to go on to their field.

### Retreat

The State Retreat will be convening September 12, 13 at the Youth Camp in Niangua, Mo. The title of the retreat this year will be "Patterns for Prayer." There will be a special missionary speaker and special Monday night service with a plane ride on flight P R A Y E R. Make plans to attend this year's retreat. The cost will be as follows: \$7.00 for the entire retreat, \$5.00 for those staying overnight, eating breakfast and lunch, and \$2.00 for those spending the one day.

Dear Co-laborers,

We would like to express our appreciation to the Missouri State Woman's Auxiliary for adopting "Francis' to the Field" as a project with a goal of \$2,000.

The Missouri State Woman's Auxiliary has always taken the lead in the support of "Missions" and we are grateful to be a recipient of your leadership.

My husband appreciated the ticket to the State Banquet and received a blessing from Mrs. Pinkerton's devotion.

I have really enjoyed working with the women in the state of Missouri and it was a real honor to serve on the Executive Committee.

Please pray for us as we move to Minnesota to establish a strong Free Will Baptist church.

Sincerely,  
Mrs. Jean Francis