

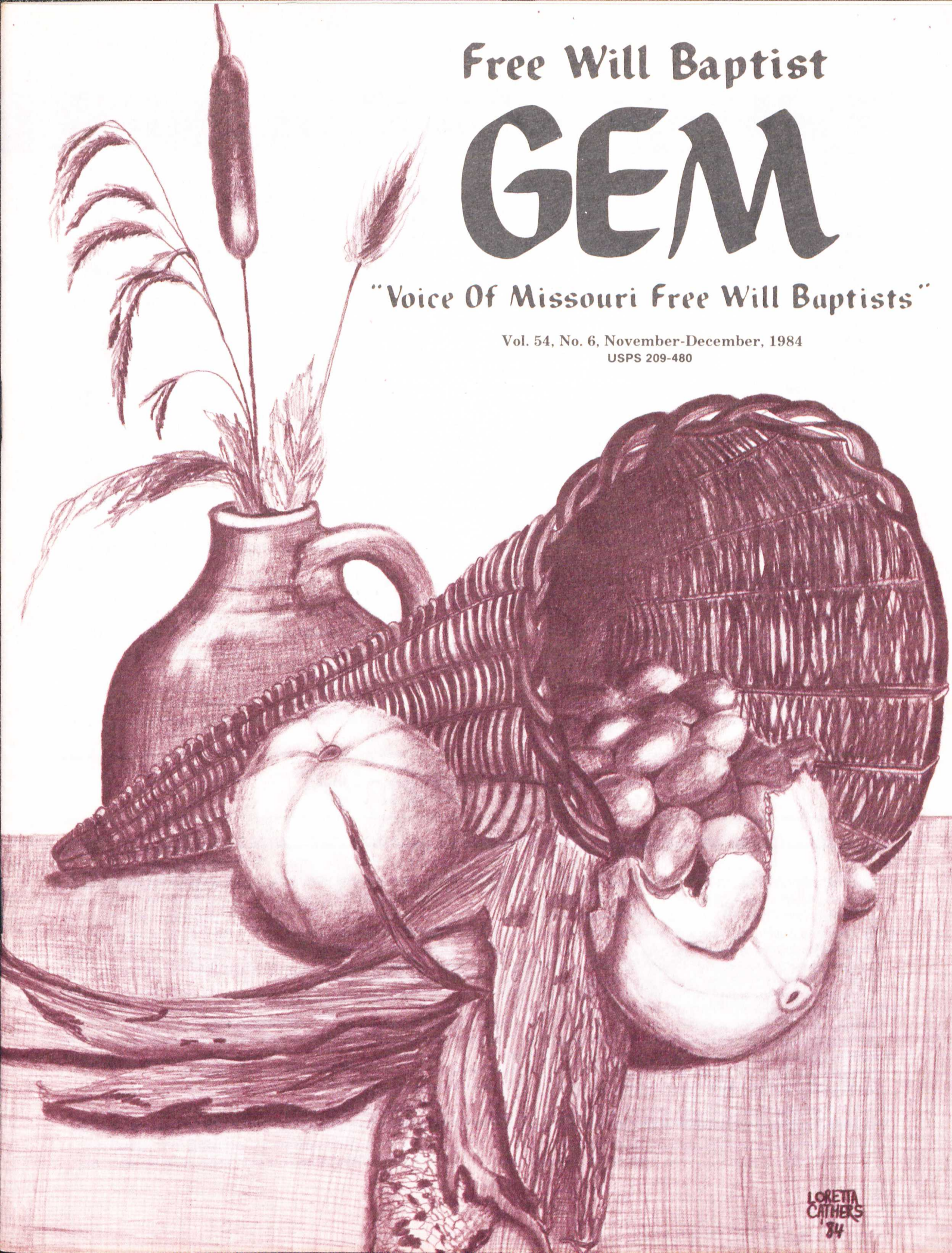
Free Will Baptist

GEM

"Voice Of Missouri Free Will Baptists"

Vol. 54, No. 6, November-December, 1984

USPS 209-480



LORETTA
CATHERS
84

SUNDAY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AVERAGES 1983-84

CHURCHES	OCT.	NOV.	DEC.	JAN.	FEB.	MAR.	APR.	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG.	SEPT.
Belton			34	37	41	42	46	41	38	32	33	34
Bethel	99	97	99	107	104	122	119		111	93	104	107
Cape Girardeau	75	73	71	74	62	68	69	62	70	62	72	70
Central				110	111	115	114	114	111	104	112	125
Coppermine	78	70	60	57	63							
Cuba				59	49	52	65	50	52	59	51	
DeSoto				162	160	167						
Farmintgon	918	725	672	713	699	746	736		681		650	672
Flat River, First	187	157	153	515	142	181	183		156	155	173	
Grace	185	173	167	146	130	223	204	189	188	179	187	190
Grant Ave										116	100	91
Hannon			81	75	73	80	80	76	81	81	76	73
Happy Home	81	77			68	77	81	74				
Hartville	101	97	92	103	96	98	101	96	92	83		
Houston	53	73	75	76	77	88	104	87	80	76	80	76
Harmony, K.C.	81	77			68	77	81	74	79	76	91	73
Marshfield	56	53	46	38	42	44						
Monett	178	165	149	165	164	174		159	162	143		
Myrtle	56	51	56	50			54	42	46	44	45	47
O'Fallon								156		128	148	139
Parkview	43	42	50	50	50	60	65					
Terrill Road				61	56		54					
Richwoods	79	90	47	40	35	39	45	52				
United, West Plains	83	85	90	87	81	84	83	89	85	97	83	
Willow Springs	93	75	86	77	83	91	89	90	88	88	98	100
West Plains, First		118	102	107	105	101						

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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FAITH IS A MIRACLE

—by Ginger Short—

Our Lord is still in the miracle business! If you wonder about this, just ask anyone in the congregation of Faith Free Will Baptist Church in Oak Grove, Missouri. Perhaps the very name “Faith” has a lot to do with this miracle.

Just one year ago, in June 1983, two families met with just 5 people around the dining room table at Granville Short’s home near Oak Grove for Bible study. No one was quite sure what the future would hold, but everyone unanimously agreed that now without a Free Will Baptist church in the area to worship in, something must be done. Even if we just met for Bible Study, it was decided that would be a start. But the Lord has promised us if we take the first step in faith, He will lead us the rest of the way. And the Lord certainly has guided us this past year on an incredible journey of faith filled with tremendous blessings.

From that very first meeting, the Lord began to build for His church. Almost immediately it was evident the Lord had plans to organize a new congregation from this small group which had always been Free Will Baptists. With the preciseness that only the Lord can arrange, the pieces began to fit together.

God long ago had called John Percival to the ministry, but until this time, John had always said no to that call. Immediately it became evident the Lord was providing a perfect opportunity for him to answer yes to the call to preach. Having been in the denomination all his life, John was certainly aware of the enormous responsibility of this calling and by early fall it was evident this group needed to become a church that was organized and affiliated with the

local association. So in the early afternoon of Sunday, December 4, 1983, amid an ice storm, Faith Free Will Baptist Church was officially organized and affiliated with the Greater Kansas City Association of Free Will Baptists, and John Percival was licensed to preach as its first pastor—just six short months after that first Bible study, with 14 charter members!

Scarcely had the ink dried on the corporation certificate when the Lord, knowing we had outgrown the living room, led us to a building for sale—and not just any old ordinary building for sale, either. This is a very special building. It is 6,000 square feet of church in the very heart of Oak Grove—a landmark, in fact, in this community—filled with every possible convenience we need to have to function as a church.

But the best part was that He didn’t just show it to us—He arranged every single detail to the very minutest part—including financing—so we could buy this beautiful building. Nor did He stop there, though, because He knew we’d need a way to pay for it once we were in it, so He even provided for that need. Fantastic!

Now barely a year since that first Bible study, Faith Free Will Baptist Church is organized with our very own pastor, John Percival, a Christian day care center has opened with a full-time staff, and other outreach ministries are starting as the need arises in the community.

It is impossible to express the jubilation of this congregation at this time. Even more impossible is trying to imagine what the Lord has planned for us in the years ahead—but of this we are certain—the Lord is still in the miracle business—we know for sure because we’ve just been part of one! Praise the Lord!

Points for Pastors

—by Jim McAllister—

In the last issue I briefly discussed hiring a new staff member. More and more of our churches are realizing the necessity of hiring second and third men. If our churches are going to continue to grow it will require specialized help. A man can successfully pastor 150 people; the attendance should increase approximately 100 people from each new staff member.

Should we wish to increase church attendance beyond 150 if it requires additional help? The answer is obvious. Yes! And, the answer is yes for several reasons.

1. It is *economically* practical to have a larger church. We are talking about more people, but, other than one more salary, all the basic costs remain virtually the same. 100 additional people will, if disciplined, provide much more financial increase than just one

man’s salary.

2. It is *evangelistically* practical. Buildings, programs, and personnel are all present and available. Un-saved people can be evangelized and brought into a fully equipped church.
3. It is *effective*. Two or more men on the staff should be able to work together and reach much more than just two times what one man can reach. They specialize in various department and become experts. For example, music, bus, youth, senior citizens, young marrieds. All these staff members must become experts at soul winning and visitation.
4. It is *equitably* practical. There are many people in every area and community that need to be reached. For a church to become satisfied at 150 in Sunday school is to oppose the commands of our Lord to go out and compel them to come in that my house may be filled.

MY TESTIMONY

by Troy Ballew



I am writing this because it might help others in their journey through life. I always find it easier to write down my feelings on paper rather than using verbal conversation.

I suppose that I should mention some things about myself. I am 17 years old. I live in Marshall, Missouri, which is approximately 30 miles north of Sedalia, Missouri. I have two sisters who are Christians. In fact, my entire family has professed faith in Christ.

Ever since my conversion, which was at the tender age of six, I have been active in the church. I attend the Olivet Free Will Baptist Church. My pastor is Reverend Cliff Bowman, whom I admire and appreciate.

My main responsibility in the church is to make sure that every child on my bus route comes to church on Sunday. In other words, I am a bus captain. I also teach in the Junior Church. Why do I do these things? I do them for two reasons: First, the Bible states that a Christian must go into the world and tell others about the saving power of our Lord Jesus Christ. Second, I enjoy very much doing service for the Lord. God sent His only Son to die for my sins. So in

response to His love for me, I want to do something because I love Him.

Thus far, I have had a truly magnificent Christian life. What makes my life more beautiful is the fact that I attend a Christian school. I have to admit I would not be producing fruit for the Lord if I had no Christian education and training. I encourage anyone, undecided about his education, to make a wise decision concerning this.

Christians usually endure some hardships. And, it seems that teenagers especially do this. It is so good to know, and I am thrilled that Jesus knows, about our everyday problems and wants to help. He wants to help everyone. I have come to believe that I can rely on my Savior to help me through my daily confrontations with Satan. The Bible says that we will always have a way of escape from temptation if we put our trust in God.

I am so thankful that I know that God loves me. He loves you, too. Without the help of Jesus, my life would be an utter fiasco. If you have never trusted Him, may I encourage you to do so. It's great and you will never be sorry.

Minute Meditations

by Gene Crewse

"Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not to covetousness" (Psalm 119:36).

In this prayer we see two contrasting lifestyles that we are choosing for ourselves. Either we are leaning toward God's Word and His desires for our lives, or we are leaning toward covetousness and our own selfish desires.

If we lean toward God's Word, we find, according to Psalm 19:7, 8 that it converts the soul, makes wise the simple, rejoices the heart, and enlightens the eyes. Is there any wonder the psalmist prayed "incline my heart unto thy testimonies."

If we lean toward covetousness, which is the insatiable desire to obtain possessions we are capable of breaking every commandment of God and bringing

destruction upon ourselves. I believe it is possible to break the other nine commandments if we covet.

Because of Achan's covetous desires (Joshua 7), his entire family was destroyed and his people were defeated. In His introduction to the parable of the rich fool in Luke 12:13, Christ gave a very profound warning, "beware of covetousness."

Which lifestyle would we pray for? As David did, may we ask God to incline our hearts unto His testimonies. This will point us to the One who fulfills His testimonies, who is Christ Jesus. Then let us turn our hearts away from covetousness, which dispels His testimonies; thereby keeping us from becoming like Christ Jesus.

Churches People And Events

Dedication Service at Farmington

On Sunday evening, September 9, 1984, the First Free Will Baptist Church in Farmington, Missouri, held a Dedication Service. The church had remodeled and redecorated the auditorium and made some changes on the exterior of the building.

The remodeling included an enlarged balcony, additional classrooms, and a new and enlarged foyer. The auditorium now has seating to accommodate 700.

The outside of the building was also given a new look with the two expanded entrances and an accommodating ramp.

Reverend Clarence Burton, state executive secretary, delivered the dedicatory message. In his opening remarks he stated, "The 'new look' is a beautiful look. It has enhanced the appearance of the auditorium, it is more accommodating, and obviously more adequate. It is amazing how this church can continue to grow regardless of the size of this city. And, it looks as if it will continue to grow for years to come." The church choir, under the direction of John Smith, presented special music, along with Stacie McAllister and David Bates.

The pastor, Reverend Jim McAllister, recognized many people who had labored faithfully and in some cases sacrificially to see the endeavor completed. He stated, "On behalf of the church, I express deep and heartfelt appreciation to these standing before me (the ones to whom special recognition was given), and to each member of this church. But only God knows the full extent to which you have given of yourselves and only He can bless you and reward you for your unselfish labor."



John Smith directing the Song Service



Pastor McAllister and congregation



Clarence Burton delivering message

Grace Church Involved in Sunday School Campaign

The Grace Church at Arnold, Missouri, is participating in the "Count On Me Campaign" sponsored by the Sunday School and Church Training Department.

Leaman Killiam, church reporter, writes that Sunday, October 7, was Mystery Sunday. Charles Radke was the mystery person of the week. Harry Long and Thelma Deaton were recipients of gifts as a result of finding balloons under pens.

The Lord blessed with decisions during the morning invitation at the altar service. This was a result of prayers and visitation.

The church is blessed with a good pastor, Brother Glen Rehkop, and many fine officers and teachers.

Brother Joel Robertson is in charge of the bus ministry and is to be commended for the fine work that he is doing.

Pray for us as we labor together that we may win souls to Jesus.

The pastor, Brother Glen Rehkop, will be with the South Roxanna Free Will Baptist Church for revival services November 12-16.

Joint Revival Effort at Licking

The New Life Free Will Baptist Church, Licking, Missouri, was one of the six churches participating in a Joint-City Wide Revival. There are six churches active in the Ministerial Alliance. Each of the six churches and pastors cooperated in the revival effort.

Reverend Max Courtney, pastor of the New Life Church, writes, "It was a blessing to see each of the churches participating." Six sermons were preached by the pastors and it was noted that "the blood of Jesus, the New Birth, separated living, a Heaven to gain and a Hell to shun" were proclaimed. It was noted also, that the services were well attended with the building almost filled each evening.

Brother Courtney states that the revival was so successful that the ministers have determined to do the same thing next year.



Pastor Courtney and members of the ministerial alliance

Special Service at Rolla

The First Free Will Baptist Church at Rolla, Missouri, held a special service on Sunday, October 7, 1984. It was a Homecoming and a Step of Faith Service. The Mission Church became a self-supporting church.

Reverend Cliff Bowman, chairman of the State Home Missions Board, delivered the morning message. He mentioned several qualities that a church should possess and challenged the church to make these a part of their church ministry. Reverend Millard Sasser, State Moderator, delivered the afternoon message. He challenged the church to follow the

example of the church at Thessalonica. By doing this, he stated, the church in Rolla will make an impressive impact in that city for the cause of Christ.

The pastor, Reverend Dale Cochran, recognized the church board, other leaders in the church, and the workers in the Sunday school. He expressed appreciation to the church for its faithfulness and willingness to serve the Lord. He said, "We have a big job to do for the Lord and I believe that He will help us do it."



Pastor Cochran and Church Board



Pastor Cochran, wife Barbara, congregation Rolla Church

Bible College Enrolls 417 For Fall Semester

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE—Free Will Baptist Bible College has enrolled 417 students from 26 states and seven foreign countries for the fall semester of the 1984-85 school year, according to Dr. Charles E. Hampton, registrar. Four graduate school enrollees bring the semester total to 421.

Tennessee leads all states, with 70 students enrolled, followed closely by North Carolina with 65. Other states with 20 or more are Alabama (26), Georgia (22), Illinois (28), Indiana (30) and Michigan (24).

By classes, the student body breaks down to 86 seniors, 80 juniors, 113 sophomores, 124 freshmen and 14 special students. Ministerial students number 95, and 63 others are preparing for missionary service.

The early school year services were especially blessed. Scores of decisions indicate that the 1984-85 school year will be special at FWBBC.

President Thigpen noted, "Even though the college enrolled about nine percent less than a year ago, there was an excellent spirit of enthusiasm and expectancy among the students. With more than 400 eager, alert students, we have a great group to train and educate."

Please pray daily for the teachers, staff, and students.

Hillsdale Completes Fall Enrollment

August 30, marked the close of enrollment for the fall semester at Hillsdale Free Will Baptist College. As of this date, 156 students had enrolled for college credit courses.

This fall's student body includes 70 freshmen, 38 sophomores, 19 juniors, 18 seniors, and 11 special students. These students come from 14 states and 7 foreign countries; 88 students are men and 68 are women. On-campus students total 72; off-campus students total 84.

According to Dr. Thomas Marberry, Vice President of Academic Affairs, this is not a record enrollment, but it certainly is a healthy enrollment in a time when many college enrollments are actually declining. "We believe that we are looking forward to a good year. We desire the prayers and support of Free Will Baptist people," Marberry said.

Depth Devotional Makes Second Debut

Depth, a daily devotional guide, published by the CTS Department from 1962 through 1973, will make its second appearance beginning with the Spring Quarter, 1985.

According to Dr. Roger C. Reeds, General Director of Randall House Publications, *Depth* will take on an entirely new format. Instead of being based on a Sunday School daily Bible reading, it will follow a practical, doctrinal, inspirational, and denominational emphasis. Each of these areas will be treated every quarter.

It will be uniquely Free Will Baptist in every sense of the word. Denominational prayer requests for both home and foreign missionaries, Bible colleges, and other department will be listed on a daily basis.

The compact 4" x 7" pocket or purse size will make it attractive and portable yet permit the size of print to be large enough for middle-age and older adults.

It will be listed on the Spring Quarter, 1985 Randall House order blank. Churches are encouraged to order enough copies for each family in the church.

Plan to make *Depth* a part of your daily devotions.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Hillsdale Free Will Baptist College in Moore, Oklahoma, broke ground Friday, September 7, for a new Library/Classroom Building. The masonry and steel structure will have a total of 10,500 square feet. Library space will be 4,500 square feet with the remaining 6,000 square feet to be used for classroom space and faculty offices. The contract was awarded to R.F.D. Construction Co. of Sulphur, Oklahoma.

A fund-raising drive preceded ground breaking with more than one-half of the \$640,000 price tag raised. During the nine months of construction, fund raising will continue with the goal of the building being debt free by the time of completion.

On hand for ground breaking were: Members of the Board of Trustees; Dr. J. A. Leone, chancellor of the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education; Mrs. Jennie January, representative of the City of Moore; Rev. Robert Bryan, representative of the National Association of Free Will Baptists; Rev. Clarence Burton, Executive Secretary of the State of Missouri; Mr. Wayne Newall, representing David Joslin of the Arkansas State Association; Mr. Brad Holdeman, representing Kansas; Rev. Billy Walker, Executive Secretary of Texas; Loyd Morris, Executive Secretary of New Mexico; and Rev. Lonnie DaVoult, Executive Secretary of the Oklahoma State Association of Free Will Baptists.



Breaking ground for the Library/Classroom building from left to right are: Rev. Ray Gwartney, Pres. Edwin Wade, Rev. Lonnie DaVoult, and Rev. Clarence Burton

New Workers Join Bible College Faculty, Staff

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE—Several new employees have joined the Free Will Baptist Bible College family recently. Their presence will greatly enhance the training of the students and the services

the college renders.

Please pray for these new FWBBC employees:

FACULTY

Mrs. Susan Armontrout, business teacher

Rev. Robert Shockey, Christian Service director and campus pastor

STAFF

Miss Rebecca Aycock, student supervisor

Mr. Leonard Ball, student supervisor

Mrs. Angie Deel, secretary

Mr. Randy Fosse, student supervisor

Mr. Clayton Hampton, maintenance worker

Mrs. Rhonda Helms, secretary

Mrs. Frances Mercer, campus nurse

Mrs. Peggy Messer, cashier

Dr. Youstra To Be Featured At Christian Schools Conference

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE—Dr. George Youstra, a graduate of Bob Jones University, appointed by President Reagan to the U.S. Department of Education, will be the featured speaker at Free Will Baptist Bible College's 1985 Christian Schools Conference, February 18-20, according to Dr. Ken Riggs.

Dr. Youstra, in addition to his service with the government, has served as a high school teacher and principle, college professor, and as dean of a Christian college. He also has been very active in conservative politics.

The conference will feature workshops/seminars, interviews with prospective teachers, and booths to display the ministries of Free Will Baptist day schools, as well as agencies that serve Christian schools.

For more information, write to the Bible College.

New Arrivals On Home Missions Fields:

The National Home Missions Department has announced that these new arrivals are on these missions fields: Tim Coats in Rapid City, South Dakota; Fred Jones is attending language school at Rio Grande Bible Institute in Edinberg, TX; Mike Mutchler in Portland, Oregon; and Bill Reagan in Ontario, Canada.

Aldridge Appointed Overseas Secretary For Foreign Missions

The Foreign Missions Department has announced that veteran missionary Jimmy Aldridge has been officially appointed to the newly established position of overseas secretary for Foreign Missions. He is scheduled to assume the post later this year.

According to Rolla Smith, general director, Jimmy

will be planning and developing this new ministry which will include coordinating, counseling, advising, and trouble shooting for the various mission fields. His wife Janie will work with him in this new ministry.

Aldridge's health problems have left some doubt about his being able to stand the tropical heat on a continuing basis. It was thought that he could be of tremendous benefit to the mission fields in this new ministry.

The Aldridges have served with the department since 1962, laboring in the Ivory Coast, West Africa. Jimmy served the field council as field chairman for several years.

With Our Missionaries

Jim Williams at Carthage, MO. writes: The Lord has been blessing our work here. We are seeing souls saved and people being added to our charter members. We have a total of 36 at present. This past month we averaged 42 in Sunday school and our Sunday evenings and Wednesday evenings have averaged about 30. The work on the building is progressing well, and we hope to be in the auditorium soon. (By the time the *Gem* is mailed out the church will probably be in the upper level, the auditorium.) Please continue to remember us with your prayer and financial support.

Bill Fulcher writes from Houston, TX: Many thanks to all of you that have helped us with our project, the church van. This continues to be our main financial need at this time. This van is very vital to our work. It provides a way of transportation for those that do not have it; it makes visits to hospitals possible, and it surely helps in door-to-door visitation. We are seeing some come to Christ, and we are gaining new prospects. Thanks to those who have sent clothing. It has helped supply the need for those who have come to us in need. We thank God for the privilege of working with the Home Missions Department.

Vergel Maness writes from Vineland, N.J.: Thank you for the financial support to our account. Please be faithful to the Maness account until the work here becomes self-supporting. I feel good about the work in Vineland. It is doing well. The National Home Missions Board loaned our church the needed money from their C.E.L.F. program. We are rejoicing that financing has been arranged.

Vernon Long writes from Jackson, TN: I have had to go back on itinerant because of the deficit in my missionary account. I hope that I will receive enough support in order that I can be on the field here in Jackson. I believe the work suffers while I am away. I look forward to your continued financial and prayer support.

Jim and Olena McLain in Japan: One of the highlights of the summer was our time of camps for our English school and church young people. We had five camps. It was hard work but it was rewarding.

Two young people made profession of faith in Christ, and one is following the Lord in baptism. We hope to see the other do the same at a later date. The Lord is blessing our labor with an increase in attendance and interest. It may seem that the work is slow in Japan, but after the seed is sown we will see some germinate and then grow. Pray with us that the seed that we have sown will bear fruit for the Lord. Thanks so much for the prayer and financial support. We need it.

Dave and Sharon Filkins preparing to go to the field: We have a busy schedule prepared for our itinerant this fall and winter. Please remember us in these services, with your prayers. We have finished linguistics school, and we are looking forward to going overseas to enter into our missions ministry. We do need your prayers and financial support.

*The Larry Insko*es from Panama: We recently celebrated the eighth anniversary of our mission in Las Tablas. It is an encouragement to see some of the results of our efforts as Free Will Baptists in this area of Panama. We thank God for your faithful support as a part of the team. Surely you can rejoice with us as we see the fruit of our labor for the Lord.

Dale and Sandra Bishop in Japan: Since being home we have traveled with a pretty full schedule. We are planning to return to Japan next summer. We praise the Lord for His protecting hand on us as we have traveled almost 10,000 miles. The Lord is blessing our labor in Japan. Even while away we have heard that two housewives and one college student have accepted Christ as Savior. Thanks for being a part of God's work in Japan.

The Eddie Paymes in Africa: Attendance in the Bouna Church and in the Children's S.S. and church is good. Continue to remember the pastor, Koffi David, in your prayers. We are thankful for the zeal that some of the young men have to witness for Christ. Without your prayers and financial support we could not be here. We are thankful the Lord has called us to labor together.

An Open Letter To Free Will Baptists

VICTORIOUS FAITH, our national radio and television ministry is really shaping up. The radio broadcast, Lord willing, will be available to be aired January 1, 1985. The telecast is scheduled for viewing during the 50th Anniversary of the National Association in Nashville, Tennessee, July 1985.

The programs are thoroughly Free Will Baptist—our theme "Faith is the Victory" was written by *John H. Yates*, a Free Will Baptist of D. L. Moody and Ira Sankey's day. *Rev. Tom Malone*, pastor of First Free Will Baptist Church, Florence, Alabama, is our speaker for radio, and *Dr. Melvin Worthington*, Executive Secretary of the National Association of Free Will Baptists, has agreed to speak for the pilot television program.

To continue and complete our work, we must

know two things from you, our Free Will Baptist people.

1. *Do you want to sponsor VICTORIOUS FAITH on your radio in your area?* Early receipt of this information is essential to preparing program tapes. Local churches, associations, individuals, or reputable businesses will want to consider sponsoring the program in your area. Arrangements will need to be negotiated with local stations and requests for program tapes made by November 15. We have prepared a full calendar quarter tapes (13 programs) to be shipped to you or your station for broadcast January 1, 1985.

2. *Will you help us financially?*

A "bare bones budget" of \$23,700 is essential for our work. (This figure does not reflect \$30,000 included in our budget for purchasing air time since we are asking you to purchase our time on a station in your area.) Although the National Association approved our budget and provided approximately \$2,000 through 1% of cooperative receipts, we must raise most of our budget through appeals to our churches.

To complete our work we must have the help of many churches and individuals in cash gifts by December 31. We could accept "firm commitments" to be paid by February 1, 1985. *Whichever way you choose to help, we must hear from you by December 31, 1984. This is the deadline we have set to assess whether our people are behind us in this endeavor.* If by December 31 we have the \$23,700 in hand or "firm commitments" we will proceed to enter the necessary contracts for production of the pilot television programs. If we do not have the money or "firm commitments," we will have to seek further direction from our National Association.

During the 1984 National Association we made a plea for people to stand, committing themselves or their churches, to a \$100 gift. The response was overwhelming with some coming by our booth and giving the gift immediately. We need those others who stood to follow through and send their gift now. In addition, we need many others to step forward and be a part of this historic and exciting venture of faith by Free Will Baptists.

It is so very important that you not lay this matter aside, forget and later regret it. Will you go immediately to your phone and call "toll free" 1-800-251-5762 to our treasurer Rev. Larry Hampton and tell him you are sending a cash gift or give him a "firm commitment" to be paid by February 1, 1985? We just must have that \$23,700 in hand or in "firm commitments" by December 31, 1984, else we cannot proceed. Remember we must know by November 15, 1984 if you want to sponsor the program in your area and whether you will help us with a gift by December 31 or a "firm commitment" to be paid by February 1, 1985.

Those churches and individuals who respond with a gift of \$100 or more by February 1, 1985 will have their names inscribed on a *Media Memorial Plaque* to

be displayed during the *50th Anniversary* of our National Association and eventually hung in our

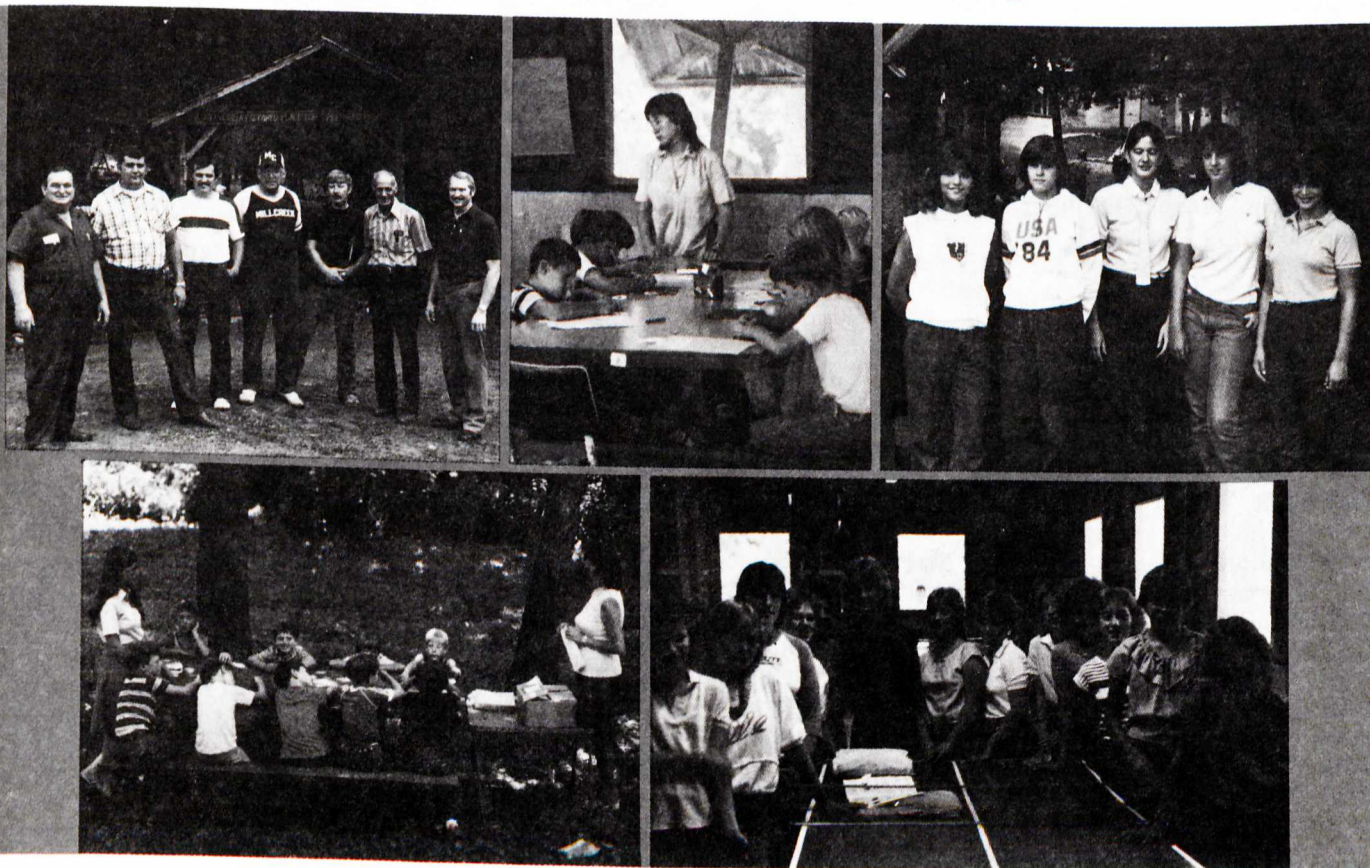
office to memorialize the help given this ministry at its inception.

Preacher-Layman's Seminar Speakers



Glen Rehkop, Tom Marberry, Jim McAllister, Raymond Haden, Gary Fry

Memories of Youth Camp



1985 WRITERS' CONTEST

- **Seven Different Categories**
- **New Low Entry Fees**
- **Higher Cash Awards**
Earn \$25, \$50, \$250 or More

***March 15, 1985
Deadline for Entries***

**New Book entry Requirements—
Opportunity for Royalty Contract**

(See news release on other side for full details.)



Randall House Publications

P.O. Box 17306 • Nashville, TN 37217

RANDALL HOUSE SETS NEW REQUIREMENTS FOR 1985 WRITERS' CONTEST

The eighth successive Writers' Contest is being sponsored by Randall House Publications, according to Dr. Roger C. Reeds, General Director.

The purpose of the Writers' Contest is to: (1) discover new talent, (2) afford expression to existing talent, (3) and give recognition and encouragement to superior talent.

The deadline for entries is March 15, 1985. Fees for each entry have been reduced to \$3.00. Entries and fees should be directed to: Reverend Harrold D. Harrison, Writers' Contest Director, P.O. Box 17306, Nashville, Tennessee 37217. Checks should be made payable to Randall House Publications.

RULES OF ENTRY

1. Any member of a church in the National Association of Free Will Baptists may enter.
2. Each entry must be religious in nature and the original, unpublished work of the contestant.
3. Entries must be typewritten; otherwise, they will not be considered. Each typewritten page should have 25 double-spaced lines of type. Each line should be approximately 70 spaces in length. The writer's name, address, and category of entry (Short Story, Poetry, etc.), as well as the approximate *total* number of words in the entry, are to be placed in the upper right-hand corner of the first page. Please adhere to the requirements listed under "CATEGORIES" as to the length of each entry in the seven categories.
4. Entries must be postmarked no later than March 15, 1985. Those postmarked after March 15, 1985 will not be considered.
5. A contestant may submit *one* entry each in no more than *two* categories (the \$3 entry fee is required for each entry); however, entrant is eligible for first place in only one category. (Please do not send more than one entry in any one category and no more than two entries total.) All entries become the property of Randall House Publications.
6. Winners will be announced in press releases to editors of Free will Baptist state papers, where applicable, and in *Contact Magazine*.
7. Winning entries may be published; space, time, and priorities permitting.

CATEGORIES

1. *Exegesis/Sermon*. Each exegesis should develop a brief passage of Scripture, not to exceed 15 verses in length. Each entry should be at least 10 pages in length but not more than 14 pages. Sermon text and subject are left to the discretion of the writer. Outlining is suggested, but not mandatory.
2. *Short Story*. A short story should not exceed 25 pages in length.
3. *Poetry*. Poetry entries should consist of rhymed or unrhymed verses of not more than 100 lines which develop a central theme or image.
4. *Tract*. Gospel tracts or tracts on special spiritual subjects are acceptable. These should be short enough to be published in the usual tract format; not more than six pages.
5. *Plays/Skits*. Not to exceed 14 pages in length, plays or skits should contain plot, theme, dialogue, characterization, setting, suggested set design, and stage directions.
6. *Book*. A book entry may be of any nature as long as it serves a religious purpose. Suggestions include devotional guides, novels, commentaries, guides to practical Christian living, etc. Length should not be less than 50,000 or more than 90,000 words. *Only book entries accepted for publications will receive awards.*
7. *Art/Visuals*. In this category, any one of the following would be acceptable: a photo, painting, drawing, or poster, adhering to the main principles of element and design. Each entry must be a minimum of 8" x 10".

CRITERIA

Entries will be judged on the basis of contestant's creativity, composition techniques, originality, expertise of the literary or art form selected, impact, and theme content.

AWARDS

In each of the categories except books the awards are:

First place—\$50.

Second place—\$25.

Books accepted for publication

First place—\$250 plus Randall House royalty contract
Second place—\$250

WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO MY PASTOR IF . . . ?

Have you ever stopped to think, What will happen to my pastor and his family if he becomes seriously ill and requires extended hospitalization; suffers an accident and becomes disabled; suddenly dies; or (thinking more optimistically) reaches an age where retirement is possible?

Forget the "what if" because it is a fact that ministers are occasionally hospitalized. Some become disabled, others die, and many even live to retire. Actually, unless Jesus comes soon, every pastor will face at least one or more of these possibilities.

In light of that, it seems wise that a church be interested in planning for its pastor's future.

As Christians we all recognize our absolute dependence upon God. No pre-planning can eliminate the need for His continuous direction and provision. Yet, the Scriptures are clear that God gave us a thinking-planning ability; and He expects us to use it in preparing for our spiritual and physical future. (Look at these passages—Proverbs 6:6-11; 22:3; 24:3-6; Luke 14:28, 29.)

How do we get started? The most obvious place is with the pastor's salary. For instance, what basis does your church use to establish his salary? Is it, Can he "get by" on x number of dollars, or will this amount allow him to support his family relatively worry free?

Many people compare the pastor's salary dollar for dollar, with their take-home pay. But can it be compared? Often it cannot. Why? Because in most cases there are a number of benefits that public work offers that are not included in a pastor's salary, such as:

1) Hospitalization coverage. Almost every employer protects himself and his employees by providing some type of medical coverage. In some cases it even extends to provide coverage for the entire family or offers coverage at a lower group rate for an additional charge. Do you offer hospitalization coverage to your pastor? If so, great. But if not, why not consider it.

2) Disability insurance. This is an added feature to many paychecks. It may take the form of workman's compensation or unemployment or be provided in another type of insurance package. Yet, the only protection offered most ministers in this regard is the good will of their people. This is not in any way to demean God's people, for many pastors have been blessed with folks who would and have given sacrificially to help the pastor and family in case of this

type of need. Yet, few churches have enough extra income to put another pastor on the field and continue to give the disabled pastor any long-term help. The easiest way to provide for this possibility is to secure a reasonable amount of disability insurance for the pastor and review it each pastoral change.

3) What about retirement? If the pastor is blessed with long life, he most definitely will come to face with retirement. There will be a time when he no longer will be asked to pastor. He may fill the pulpit as a guest preacher, but he will not receive a regular income as a preacher.

Many churches provide parsonages for the pastor which makes it convenient for him when he comes to pastor the church, but when he leaves he has no equity in a house. The parsonage is provided as a part of the salary, and the pastor is grateful for this provision; but when he must provide his own house, he has no house. And, inasmuch as the parsonage has been included as a part of his salary, there has not been any extra income to use for a house payment. The church can do two things: Give a parsonage allowance, or give a modest amount to the pastor when his services are terminated in order that he may begin to build a "house fund" for the future when he is forced to retire.

The Missouri State Association offers a Retirement Program through the National Board of Retirement and Insurance. The people of Missouri have gone on record that they do care for their pastors. In 1978 the Missouri State Association adopted a plan whereby a pastor and/or full-time Christian worker can give \$90.00 every six-months, the church where the pastor and/or full-time Christian worker serves gives \$90.00 every six-months, and the Missouri State Retirement Program gives \$180.00 every six-months. Inasmuch as this program is supplied through an allocation of cooperative giving, the church is required to support with the regular amount of ten percent of its regular tithes and offerings. What a tremendous help this will prove to be to the pastor and full-time Christian workers. (The pastor may have employment other than the church he serves, and still be eligible.) If your pastor is eligible but as yet is not a participant in this program, why not let him know that you are favorable to him becoming a participant.

Remember, What Will Happen To My Pastor If . . . ?

Editor's note: Portions of this material are copies from "Happenings" and other sources by the editor.

COOPERATIVE DISBURSEMENTS

September 1984

18.50%	Missouri State Home Missions	\$ 3,308.53
17.00%	Executive Department & Gem	3,040.27
3.50%	General Fund	625.94
10.50%	Youth Camp	1,877.82
1.75%	Christian Education	312.97
1.75%	Sunday School & CTS	312.97
2.50%	Retirement Village	447.10
5.00%	Retirement Program	894.20
39.50	National Departments and Hillsdale	7,064.16
	[Hillsdale (6.00%)—\$1,073.04]	
Total	\$17,883.96

The Lord continues to bless for which we are so thankful. As you will note this month's receipts are down a little. No doubt, because we had to close out for the month on the day following the last Sunday of the month. But we are meeting the total projected goal. For this we can praise God who touches the hearts of faithful pastors and churches that give for a home, a national, and worldwide ministry for the cause of Christ.

COOPERATIVE DISBURSEMENTS

August 1984

18.50%	State Home Missions	\$ 4,237.25
17.00%	Executive Department & Gem	3,893.69
3.50%	General Fund	801.64
10.50%	Youth Camp	2,404.93
1.75%	Christian Education	400.82
1.75%	Sunday School & CTS	400.82
2.50%	Retirement Village	572.60
5.00%	Missouri State Retirement Program	1,145.20
39.50	National Departments and Hillsdale	9,047.10
	[Hillsdale (6.00%)—\$1,374.24]	
Total	\$22,904.05

The Lord continues to bless with faithful churches giving for the cause of Christ. We praise Him for it! May the Lord bless the dedicated pastors and laypeople that are committed to spreading the gospel of Christ throughout the world.

COOPERATIVE RECEIPTS

August 1984

Terrill	\$ 112.00
Macedonia	25.00
Carthage	20.00
Hartville	249.85
Parkview	261.66
Columbia	25.00
Fordland	488.00
Berkeley	523.65
Royal Oak	30.00
Mt. Zion, Gower	62.79
Union Grove	160.00
Bailey Chapel	45.00
Mill Creek	202.46
Viburnum	150.86
Cope	27.95
Marshfield	184.65
Mine La Motte	25.00
Lingo	43.50
New Rock Springs	46.47
Mt. Pisgah	133.00
Purdy	174.00
Hopewell	504.00
Friendship	133.54
Berean	13.64

Berean	12.65
Victory, Alton	297.00
Fredericktown, First	293.00
Faith, Lemay	160.00
Pleasant Ridge	52.00
United, West Plains	326.25
Neosho	71.25
Joplin	515.98
Merl's Chapel	151.28
Rock Chapel	263.33
New Harmony	10.61
Wayside	135.48
Sedalia	62.50
Tyrone	48.84
Belton	198.19
Gospel Light	137.00
Houston	170.00
Houston	220.00
Salem	30.00
DeSoto	840.00
Hannon	331.92
Waynesville	272.84
Pleasant Home	206.76
Flat River, First	544.44
Happy Home	158.60
Grace	905.00
Rolla	185.63
Black Oak	10.00
Black Oak	10.00
Pleasant Hill	57.48
Copper Mines	192.17
Leadington	515.00
Thayer	188.92
Freeman Chapel	104.55
Seymour	92.92
Verdella	192.97
Wolf Creek	246.41
Grant Avenue	4,766.29
Harmony, Kansas City	288.00
Willow Springs	218.77
Bethel	359.00
Hopewell	153.00
Springfield, First	124.00
Jones Chapel	503.79
El Dorado Springs, First	5.00
Calvary Chapel	209.36
Olivet	250.00
Myrtle	171.60
Fordland	358.00
Byrd	27.00
Byrd	13.00
New Rock Springs	66.74
Monett	700.06
Monett	492.94
O'Fallon	619.39
Lebanon, First	376.18
Cape Girardeau	387.38
Interest	196.75
Total	\$22,904.05

COOPERATIVE RECEIPTS

September 1984

Koshkonong	\$ 147.00
Grant Avenue	447.94
Hartville	202.84
Eastern Gate	184.00
Columbia	25.00
Cope	24.28
West Plains, First	150.00
Hazel Creek	302.40
Mine La Motte	32.00
Faith, Lemay	117.85
Springfield, First	100.00
Royal Oak	46.00

Mill Creek	176.89
Farmington	1,150.00
Number One	48.25
Macedonia	20.00
Mountain Valley	182.52
Parkview	216.72
Fredericktown, First	250.00
Pleasant Ridge	52.00
Calvary, Conway	157.72
Mt. Zion, Gower	42.68
Bailey Chapel	35.00
Kingsway	150.00
Kingsway	75.00
Union Grove	120.00
Marshfield	172.56
Mt. Pisgah	135.00
Friendship	113.50
Tyrone	51.79
Terrill Road	92.00
Victory, Alton	266.00
Belton	239.19
Liberty	400.00
Flat River, First	473.11
Rock Chapel	258.60
Grace	785.00
Berkeley	395.14
Pleasant Home	170.66
Salem	30.00
Freeman Chapel	145.21
DeSoto	875.00
Sedalia	88.66
Hannon	250.35
Gospel Light	143.00
United, West Plains	223.62
Martinstown	31.00
Oskaloosa	78.14
Viburnum	153.62
Seymour	99.53
Thayer	382.15
Neosho	71.25
Merl's Chapel	49.07
Joplin	353.42
Carthage	20.00
Beacon	720.25
Beacon	551.66
Rolla	172.03
Black Oak	10.00
West Plains, First	150.00
Wolf Creek	201.24
Leadington	540.00
Copper Mines	164.30
Calvary, Conway	127.08
Lingo	44.25
Verdella	138.30
Cabool	194.14
Pleasant Hill	55.23
Twin Oak	450.00
New Harmony	9.69
Hickory Grove	52.45
Farmington	1,150.00
Lebanon, First	395.64
Cape Girardeau	420.68
O'Fallon	771.47
Interest	242.11
Total	\$17,883.96

MISSOURI STATE HOME MISSIONS GIVING July/August 1984

Jones Chapel	\$ 221.85
Wayne Williams	15.00
George Kirk	120.00
Olivet	100.00
Mill Creek Young Adult Sunday School Class	30.00
Union Light	18.00
Guy Leonard	2.00

Cooperative Receipts	6,928.45
Belton	50.00
United, West Plains	110.52
South Fremont	20.00
Liberty, Kirksville	21.00
Marshfield	62.29
Columbia	55.00
Pleasant Ridge	20.00
New Harmony	58.44
O'Fallon	76.47
Berkeley	312.00
Lloyd Walls	5.00
Judy Ice	5.00
Rock Chapel	234.73
Pleasant Home	70.00
Leadington	120.00
Beacon	50.00
Sedalia	25.00
Thayer	85.60
Myrtle	90.00
Indian Creek Association	1,427.53
Farmington	80.00
Royal Oak	40.00
Neosho	100.00
Grace	70.00
DeSoto	100.00
Houston	207.05
Oak Hill	28.51
Central	111.00
Mountain Grove, First	119.00
Dale McCurry	10.00
Monett	10.00
Bethel	75.00
Carthage	30.00
Trinity	27.00
Total	\$11,341.44

MISSOURI DESIGNATED GIVING NATIONAL HOME MISSIONS August/September 1984

Grant Avenue	\$169.00
Maness	\$65.00
Mexico	10.00
Vandivort	64.00
General Fund	30.00
Columbia	\$68.05
General Fund	\$48.05
Vandivort	20.00
Farmington	\$669.51
General Fund	\$634.51
Maness	10.00
Wright	25.00
Fredericktown, First	\$62.00
Lewis	\$22.00
Barron	20.00
Fulcher	10.00
General Fund	10.00
Kingsway	\$404.50
O'Dell	\$404.50
Marshfield	\$30.00
Maness	\$30.00
Mt. Pisgah	\$150.00
Maness	\$50.00
Lewis	50.00
Vandivort	50.00
Flat River, First	\$36.00
Maness	\$ 8.00
General Fund	19.00
Lake	2.00
Vandivort	5.00
Long	2.00
Rock Chapel	\$213.43
Maness	\$140.00
Lake	73.43
Berkeley	\$435.00

Fulcher	\$155.00	
Fulcher (Van)	150.00	
Maness	10.00	
Lewis	20.00	
Deficit Accts.	100.00	
Pleasant Home		\$10.00
Maness	\$10.00	
South East Dist. Ass'n		\$100.00
Vandivort	\$100.00	
Viburnum		\$59.00
Vandivort	\$20.00	
Maness	10.00	
Turnbough	29.00	
Thayer		\$101.00
Bevan	\$ 5.00	
Lake	5.00	
Highway Helpers	76.00	
Maness	15.00	
5th Sunday Offering (Thayer)		\$1,167.52
General Fund	\$1,167.52	
Lebanon, First		\$150.00
O'Dell	\$150.00	
Indian Creek Ass'n		\$10.00
Lake	\$10.00	
Rolla		\$100.00
Vandivort	\$100.00	
Wolf Creek		\$20.00
Vandivort	\$20.00	
Leadington		\$120.00
Maness	\$30.00	
Vandivort	30.00	
Long	20.00	
O'Dell	20.00	
Fulcher	20.00	
Bob & Glenda Keith		\$30.00
Vandivort	\$30.00	
Fordland		\$49.25
Maness	\$49.25	
Trinity		\$10.00
Fulcher	\$10.00	
Alice Hoover		\$10.00
Elder	\$10.00	
Hannon		\$20.00
Elder	\$20.00	
Eastern Gate		\$40.00
Vandivort	\$20.00	
Lewis	20.00	
Harmony, Kansas City		\$10.00
Lake	\$10.00	
Bethel		\$80.00
Elder	\$25.00	
Highway Helpers	20.00	
General Fund	25.00	
Maness	10.00	
Olivet		\$20.00
Maness	\$20.00	
South Fremont		\$2.00
Maness	\$2.00	
Myrtle		\$98.00
Maness	\$38.00	
Highway Helpers	45.00	
Elder	15.00	
Monett		\$58.00
Lake	\$38.00	
Lewis	20.00	
Total		\$4,502.26

**MISSOURI DESIGNATED GIVING
FOREIGN MISSIONS
August/September 1984**

Grant Avenue	\$4,677.10
General Fund	\$ 630.15
Bunch	861.45
Pinkerton	575.50
McLain	157.50

Hersey	1,540.00
Tallent	554.00
Bailey	296.00
Richards	12.50
Allen	50.00
Eastern Gate	\$70.00
Bunch	\$10.00
Pinkerton	20.00
Van Hook	20.00
Tallent	20.00
Columbia	\$118.06
General Fund	\$48.06
McLain	50.00
Tallent	20.00
Farmington	\$330.00
Filkins	\$25.00
Bailey	100.00
Bunch	65.00
Pinkerton	140.00
O'Fallon	\$15.00
Tallent	\$15.00
Fredericktown, First	\$40.00
Bailey	\$10.00
Turnbough	20.00
General Fund	10.00
Pleasant Ridge	\$40.00
McLain	\$20.00
General Fund	20.00
Marshfield	\$50.00
Tallent	\$20.00
Bunch	20.00
Bailey	10.00
Terrill Road	\$60.00
Bunch	\$60.00
Belton	\$50.00
Miley	\$50.00
Liberty	\$800.00
Bunch	\$400.00
McLain	400.00
Flat River, First	\$63.00
Turnbough	\$20.00
Bailey	22.00
General Fund	11.00
McLain	3.00
Cowart	2.00
Pinkerton	1.00
Hanna	2.00
Lytle	2.00
Pleasant Home	\$90.00
Turnbough	\$30.00
Miley	60.00
Byrd—Thelma Hoyt	\$23.00
Bailey	\$23.00
Berkeley	\$245.00
Deficit Accts.	\$200.00
Tallent	20.00
Miley	5.00
Lytle	20.00
Freeman Chapel	\$510.35
Pinkerton	\$510.35
Hannon	\$1,021.14
Bunch	\$921.14
Lytle	50.00
Pinkerton	50.00
Lebanon, First	\$112.50
Lytle	\$12.50
Tallent	25.00
McLain	25.00
Bailey	12.50
Pinkerton	25.00
Bunch	12.50
Brent & Cindy Thompson	\$50.00
Bunch	\$50.00
United, West Plains	\$53.55
Bunch	\$53.55
Martinstown	\$100.00

Miley	\$20.00	
Sparks	20.00	
Hanna	20.00	
McLain	20.00	
Richards	20.00	
Oskaloosa		\$230.49
Bunch	\$230.49	
Thayer		\$15.00
Pinkerton	\$10.00	
Turnbough	5.00	
Viburnum		\$82.00
Tallent	\$46.00	
Bailey	36.00	
Black Oak		\$178.67
Hanna	\$65.05	
Webb	62.01	
R. West	51.61	
Leamon & Mildred Killian		\$30.00
Lytle	\$30.00	
Leadington		\$220.00
Cowart	\$10.00	
Turnbough	30.00	
Pinkerton	20.00	
Morgan	20.00	
McLain	20.00	
Richards	20.00	
Eagleton	20.00	
Miley	20.00	
Hanna	20.00	
Lytle	20.00	
Bailey	20.00	
Faith Chapel		\$20.00
McLain	\$20.00	
Indian Creek Association		\$529.23
Banks	\$ 5.00	
Miley	100.00	
General Fund	40.00	
Bailey	58.18	
Bunch	106.05	
Cousineau	10.00	
Wode	10.00	
Bishop	100.00	
Payne	100.00	
Beacon		\$1,615.70
Pinkerton	\$850.00	
Coscia	676.00	
Bunch	89.70	
New Harmony		\$113.50
McLain	\$56.75	
Miley	56.75	
Fordland		\$85.00
Bunch	\$25.00	
Tallent	60.00	
Overland Ladies SS Class		\$27.00
Hanna	\$27.00	
Dale & Marge McCurry		\$10.00
Tallent	\$5.00	
Bunch	5.00	
South Fremont		\$215.00
Missouri Deficit Accounts	\$200.00	
Pinkerton	10.00	
Richards	5.00	
Sedalia		\$7.00
Inscoe	\$7.00	
Fourth		\$130.00
Lytle	\$120.00	
Tallent	10.00	
Houston		\$13.00
Richards	\$1.00	
Bryan	2.00	
McLain	2.00	
Payne	2.00	
Tallent	5.00	
Turnbough	1.00	
West Plains, First		\$145.00
Bailey	\$145.00	

John Schebaum		\$50.00
General Fund	\$50.00	
Rolla		\$40.00
Nichols	\$20.00	
Turnbough	20.00	
South Side		\$25.00
Tallent	\$25.00	
Bethel		\$45.00
General Fund	\$25.00	
Bailey	10.00	
Tallent	10.00	
Olivet		\$50.00
Poole	\$15.00	
Inscoe	15.00	
Sparks	10.00	
Pinkerton	5.00	
McLain	5.00	
Liberty, Kirksville		\$25.00
Pinkerton	\$25.00	
Myrtle		\$76.00
Bailey	\$46.00	
Tallent	30.00	
Trinity		\$191.00
General Fund	\$121.00	
Tallent	10.00	
Hanna	60.00	
Monett		\$882.35
Tallent	\$341.85	
Sparks	60.00	
K. Eagleton, Jr.	400.00	
Miley	50.00	
Bailey	20.00	
General Fund	10.00	
Bunch	50	
Total		\$13,557.14

MISSOURI DESIGNATED GIVING August/September 1984

HILLSDALE FREE WIL BAPTIST COLLEGE

Grant Avenue	\$ 71.00
Hannon	100.00
Central	105.00
Willow Springs	40.00
Eastern Gate	20.00
Total	\$336.00

YOUTH CAMP

Farmington (Pool)	\$ 80.00
Olivet	25.00
Mt. Pisgah	20.00
Bethel	25.00
Victory, Alton (Pool)	50.00
Leadington	20.00
Hannon	30.00
Berkeley (Pool)	25.00
Bethel, El Dorado Springs (Pool)	27.76
Sunnyview (Pool)	27.76
Oskaloosa (Pool)	40.00
New Rock Springs	37.00
Thayer	20.00
Trinity (Pool)	60.66
Lebanon, First (Pool)	100.00
Myrtle (Pool)	33.00
Monett	120.00
Fellowship	450.00
Total	\$1,183.42

FREE WILL BAPTIST BIBLE COLLEGE

Leadington	\$ 20.00
Eastern Gate	20.00
Grant Avenue	160.00
Total	200.00

Essentials of Evangelism

— by Stanley Jones —

One essential aspect of successful evangelism we perhaps need to be reminded of is honesty. Dear Reader, I believe I heard you say "Amen". But you may also wonder why such an elementary Christian virtue needs to be mentioned in connection with evangelism. You may already be aware that an honest love for God is essential to win souls. Also, an honest love for the lost is necessary; sinners can tell a phony act. And too, you no doubt know an honest approach to the reality of eternity is important before we can ever see souls saved.

But, there is another area of honesty we must come to grips with if we would win souls for Jesus. Would you agree that keeping your word is important in this over-all scheme of honesty? Perhaps it goes without saying that if we are known not to make good our promises and commitments, the unsaved will not believe us when we approach them about their salvation. If that assumption is true, then sinners are being turned off from Christ by a lot of dishonest Christians.

Do you remember when you joined your local Free Will Baptist church? You agreed to a covenant that

said in part, "... To this end we agree to labor for the promotion of ... evangelistic efforts for the salvation of the world." I don't question that we are glad when souls are saved. But there may be some dishonesty when it comes to this matter of "labor." That sounds like personal involvement to me. Can we say we are keeping our word to labor for souls when we fail to faithfully attend revival services in *our* local church? Or, when we fail to pray regularly for the salvation of souls? Or, when we fail to personally win souls? Or, when we fail to encourage and train new converts? Or, when we fail to encourage ministries in the local church that would reach out to the lost? Have we really kept our promise? Are we really being honest?

Will God use us effectively in the greatest work on earth—winning lost people to Christ—if we have not been honest in keeping the promise we made to our church family in the sight of God?

"... To this end we agree to labor for the promotion of ... evangelistic efforts for the salvation of the world" (*Free Will Baptist Church Covenant*, paragraph 7).

Don't Cancel That Insurance Policy

Maybe you took out that insurance policy when the kids were small, just in case something happened. But now the kids are grown. Or maybe the insurance man said you would need the policy to pay your estate taxes when one of you died. But maybe that was before ERTA of 1981 changed the law and gave us all an unlimited marital deduction (no tax on inter-spousal transfers during life or at death).

So now you no longer need the policy for the reason

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Unwrapping God's Christmas Present

by Max Courtney

In just a few weeks we will be cleaning up the wrappings from the presents from under the Christmas tree. I personally get a kick out of the guessing and wondering before time to open the presents. We can guess, we can be all but sure . . . but until we hold that present in our hands, with all the wrappings removed, we cannot fully appreciate the gift. Then we can try it, put it to use, forget the descriptions, and see it for ourselves. This same thing has been true of God's great Christmas Present. It has been surrounded by wrappings and disguised. Men have guessed, described, looked forward; yet, until all wrappings were removed and He was ours to have and hold in our hearts, we couldn't realize what the Present really was.

I see God's great Christmas Present wrapped in Old Testament prophecy. "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good. For before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings" (Isaiah 7:14-16). He was a Present wrapped in a wrapper of prophecy and mystery. How the prophet must have turned this Present over and over in his mind, he must have guessed and wondered as he looked at the wrapping and guessed at what might be inside.

This Present was tied securely in the ribbon of promise. Israel was steeped in their backsliding. The Assyrian armies were moving in with a threat of captivity. The Present was wrapped so securely in these prophecies that it was hard for them to realize what was inside and what it would mean to their storm-tossed nation. This same Gift lies wrapped in thousands of homes today. The storms of life are beating down. Evil is surrounding them, threatening to take them captive. The wrappings are still in place, the ribbons unmolested, keeping God's great Present from being used.

I see God's great Christmas Present wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger of a borrowed stable: "And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them" (Luke 2:16-20). Notice the wrappings of swaddling clothes. The garment of peasants covered that Present from the eyes of those who looked for a king. No purple robe; just swaddling clothes. No golden crown on His head, no ivory throne overlaid with gold; just a borrowed manger. No beautiful palace; just a stable. No legion of soldiers

standing at attention; just humble shepherds looking over the manger. No bowing servants to bring Him His bidding; just the animals lowing and bleating in the stillness of the winter night. Wrapped securely in humble surroundings until even those who came and looked on didn't realize the importance of this great Christmas Present.

To thousands today He still lies in His swaddling clothes in His borrowed manger, a Present unwrapped. He is picked up once a year and fondled and studied and laid carefully away again until next Christmas season with the wrappings still in place.

I see God's great Christmas Present wrapped in the blindness of religious form and ritual and rejection. The Bible states, "And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong. But he passing through the midst of them went his way" (Luke 4:29, 30). They refused to remove the wrappings of religious form and ritual and unwrap God's Christmas Present. Miracle after miracle, good works after good works, and they didn't see. They even had to buy false testimony to convict Him, yet they refused to believe their eyes and to unwrap the Gift from God.

I see God's great Christmas Present today wrapped in unbelief and unconcern. "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption to wit, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it" (Romans 8:22-25). It is faith that unties the ribbon on God's great Christmas Present. It is hope that takes off the wrapper. It is our spirit that receives the Present and makes it work for us. "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Romans 10:9-13).

The Present lies there before you. You can guess; you can wonder; you can look at the description others have given; you can speculate as to how it will affect your life; but until you unwrap it and put it to use in your own life, God's great Christmas Present can never be real to you.

About the writer: Rev. Max Courtney is pastor of the New Life Church at Licking, Missouri. He is active in denominational work. He is a member of the Youth Camp of the Missouri State Association.

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Merry Christmas And A Happy New Year

from the Gem Family, the Burtons

It's Christmas time again! This is a special time of the year. It is a time when, in a special way, we celebrate the birthday of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I am glad for Christmas because it is exciting to remember in Scripture, in song, in poetry, and in drama the birthday of the greatest Person who ever lived. Let's make this a memorable event this year and remember that we, as a result of God's grace, have been given the greatest Gift: "For God so loved the world, that *he gave his only begotten Son.*"

Let us share with you "A Christmas Prayer" by Helen Steiner Rice and may it be our prayer throughout the coming year.

O God, our help in ages past
Our Hope in years to be
Look down upon this present
And see our need of Thee.
For in this age of unrest,
With danger all around,
We need Thy hand to lead us
To higher and safer ground.
We need thy help and counsel
To make us more aware
That our safety and security
Lie solely in Thy care.
And so we pray for this Christmas
To feel Thy Presence near
And for Thy all-wise guidance
Throughout the coming year.
First, give us understanding
Enough to make us kind,
So we may judge all people
With our heart
and not our mind,
And help us when we falter
and renew our faith each day
And forgive our human errors
And hear us when we pray,
And keep us gently humble
In the greatness of Thy love
So some day we are fit to dwell
With Thee in peace above.