

THE FREE WILL BAPTIST GEM

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**The steps of a good man
are ordered by the Lord:
and he delighteth in his way.
Psalms 37:23**

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How Does God Train Young Ministers?

By Pastor R. E. Dablemont

God has a way of providing meaningful lessons in practical theology for those He calls into service. While formal, systematic study of the Word of God is important and should not be neglected by the developing minister, God also teaches practical theology through personal experience. Let me share with you one of the most valuable lessons God taught me many years ago . . .

In the living room of an old country farmhouse, propped up on two old pillows, she lay there in the middle of a dilapidated hospital bed. Her skin was wrinkled and darkened with age spots. Bone thin, she weighed less than 70 pounds. As I approached her bedside, these questions swirled through my mind, "What can I say to her? How can I encourage her? How should I pray for her?"

I'll never forget that day over nineteen years ago when my pastor was away at a convention. I delivered the Sunday morning message for him. He had requested that I make a visit that afternoon with an elderly lady who was bedridden and dying of cancer. "Pray with her. It will be a blessing," he said. I was nervous, frightened, and didn't have the slightest idea what to say or do, but I went anyway—a young preacher hoping somehow to bless and comfort a dying saint.

I introduced myself, explaining I was there to visit her in place of our pastor who was out of town. The wrinkled, old face suddenly broke into a beautiful, toothless smile. She grabbed my hand, squeezed it hard as she shook it, asked about my wife and children, how long I had been serving God, what my sermon was about that morning, and it seemed like a thousand other questions. We talked for a long, long time.

She looked into my eyes, thanked me for coming, and said, "Now, let's pray." I began to pray. She was silent for a moment or two, and then she prayed for my wife and children, for my ministry, my health, for my faith to grow, for my wisdom to increase, for my love to be Christ-like, for my life to be ruled by God's will, and for God's richest blessings upon my life. I didn't want her to stop praying. As her "Amen" came, I felt the tears running down my cheeks, and I found myself thanking God for the blessing of the day. My pastor was right! I know the greatest blessing that day was one God gave a young, scared preacher-boy by the grace, joy, and prayers of a lovely saint who was much closer to God than he was. I was a young preacher blessed and comforted by a dying saint. I will never forget it.

If you have a question you would like answered about practical theology (putting into practice the teachings of God's Word), please send it to me and I will try (notice I said "try") to address the question in this monthly column.

Mailing Address: R. E. Dablemont - 651 Oakdale Circle - Cuba, MO 65453

E-Mail Address: apologistrick@yahoo.com

Bourbon FWB Church Welcomes New Pastor

By Lucreita Foster

On January 2nd of this year, the Bourbon Free Will Baptist Church welcomed their new pastor, Reverend Raymond Askren. Brother Raymond previously lived at the Free Will Baptist Youth Camp in Niangua, and pastored the Little Vine Free Will Baptist Church in the 1970s. He also served as a chaplain at the Normandy South Hospital in St. Louis for fifteen years. We are looking forward to the Lord's blessings and our church's growth in spirit and number over the coming years. We ask for our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ to remember us in their prayers.

All items for publication must be in the hands of the editor no later than the 5th of the month preceding the issue month. Business Office: 202 West Commercial, P.O. Box 991, Lebanon, Missouri 65536, Nathan Ruble, Editor. Address all correspondence relating to the GEM, including subscription and mailing information, to the above address. 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. Subscription rates: Single subscription, \$4.50 per year, cash in advance. Church Plan, \$4.00 per year, consisting of five subscriptions or more. The Church Plan will continue until it is canceled by the church. This magazine is published monthly.

Thayer WAC Enjoys a "Spot of Tea"

Thayer Women Active for Christ sponsored a Tea Party for their Enlistment Program on March 20, 2000. The theme was "A Spot of Tea," and was presented by Study Chairman, Reva Baker. The fellowship hall was turned into an English Tea Room where tables were decorated with lace, fresh flowers, tea pots and tea cups. Finger sandwiches, vegetable trays, cheeses, and English biscuits were served, along with a wide variety of hot teas, and other beverages.

Thayer WAC has eighteen members, and are active in raising funds for mission projects. The saving of Best Choice labels and the selling of our own church cookbooks have been a major source of income toward the support of missionaries.

The ladies are planning a Mother - Daughter Banquet in May.



Senior Appreciation Day

April 9, 2000

I would like to tell Grandma, Grandpa!
appreciate them and why,

My Grandma told me how
to sew buttons on shirts. She
told me how to make doughnuts,
With icing! My Grandpa taught
in the war. He tells stories
a lot.

St. Peters Church Honors Seniors

The St. Peters Free Baptist Church held a Senior Appreciation Day Sunday April 9. Pastor Ron Swaringim said, "This service is to honor our Senior Saints of today as well as a tribute to those who have touched our lives in the past."

Several young people honored the Seniors by reading poems and letters that had written for the occasion. A copy of a letter written by Allison Rough for her grand-parents is shown here.



Rev. Nathan Ruble preached the morning message. Following the service, an all-church dinner was enjoyed. After this Ernie Couch and Revival presented an afternoon of gospel music.

Thanksgiving and Praise Update

Park Hills First FWB Church

By Pearl Hutchings

First Free Will Baptist Church of Park Hills offers thanks giving and praise to God. He has brought our church a long way after the damage it received from the lightning and electrical storm in June, 1999. Much damage was done, with practically all of the new addition which was completed one year prior to the storm, receiving heavy damage. That part has now been completed once again. Our young people and church family have had fund raisers to carpet their Upper Room, which is now completed, and is a beautiful worship center.

We are so very thankful to all who have prayed and helped in many ways, but most of all, we give God the glory! On Roll Call Sunday we had standing room only (and not much of that). We began a revival with Brother Cliff Donoho on March 29 through April 2nd. Several new decisions and a good number of renewals of faith were made. The entire church was revived, and now we are looking to the future that God has planned for us.

Thank you and God bless!

The Joy of Salvation

By Pastor Jeff Huffman

The next best thing to experiencing your own salvation, is seeing someone else accept Christ into their life. It is a joy to watch new Christians being born into the family of God.

God has given our church an extra-special blessing this year with the conversion of a lady in our church. Her name is Patsy Turnbaugh, and she accepted Christ on January 2, 2000. She has seldom attended church during her life, and didn't know much about the things of God. But she is a very fast learner and a very hard worker.

God initially had gotten her attention through a very popular book series—the "Left Behind" series written by Tim LaHaye and Jerry Jenkins. (I would highly recommend this book series to any church library.) Her eyes were opened and she began attending church here at First Free Will Baptist Church in Fredericktown.

One Sunday morning, she asked my wife, Jennifer, how a person got saved. Jennifer explained it to her. That Sunday evening, Patsy came to the altar and accepted Christ. She has been responsible for many visitors coming to our church. She has since been baptized, and has joined the church along with her husband, Ed Turnbaugh. They have both been very faithful to attend church, and have worked hard in our various outreaches.

On April 16, 2000, Patsy said she had a poem that she would like to read during our worship service. She came forward, and I noticed that the poem was handwritten. Sure enough, she said the Lord had inspired her to write this poem on April 12 while she was cleaning her house.

Here is the poem she wrote which I believe is inspired by the Lord:

My Best Friend

I made a new best friend this year;
Now I will always want Him near.

I will never be alone anymore—
I'm so glad that He knocked on my door.

He comforts me when I'm gloomy and sad;
He soothes my anger when I get mad.
In times of despair, He gives me hope—
He speaks to me gently and helps me to cope.

He lets me know if I'm wrong or right;
In my darkest hour, He is my light.

Even when I'm happy, He's still by my side—
I can't be complete without Him—I've tried!

If you feel an empty place deep in your heart,
You must be missing Who's been here from the start.

Just call on the Lord; He'll be there for you.
He will be, no doubt, your best friend too!



News From The FWB Mission Work In India

Carlisle Hanna

Dear Ones,

Greetings in the precious name of Jesus Christ our Lord from India.

Many of you have prayed for me and sent cards since my back injury last December. Thank you for those prayers. I am thankful to be much better and to be able to do the work before me.

Pastors Sherwood Lee and Floyd Seay from South Carolina and Pastor Gabriel Massey from Chattarpur, M. P., India came to us for our 49th Annual Conference. We expected and planned for about two thousand. The number exceeded that for the first service on March 16. The number continued to increase until Pastor Sherwood Lee spoke to more than three thousand on Sunday morning during our last worship service. There was much hard work but people were cooperative and helpful. We needed to use at least five languages, but were limited to three. Our people were blessed by rich fellowship and the challenging messages. They returned to their villages to begin to prepare for our Golden Jubilee Conference in 2001.

March 10 was a special day for us. In the afternoon, we dedicated the new extension of our church building here. That evening we had an ordination service for four of our men. We had worked, prayed and longed for this time. These were moving services. I am so thankful I could be a part of them. Please pray for these men: Anand, James, Michael and Nicanor. They request your prayers.

We have plans to open a new Bible Institute soon in our South India field. Stanley RajKumar will be responsible for this work. Please pray for him and for our pastors there.

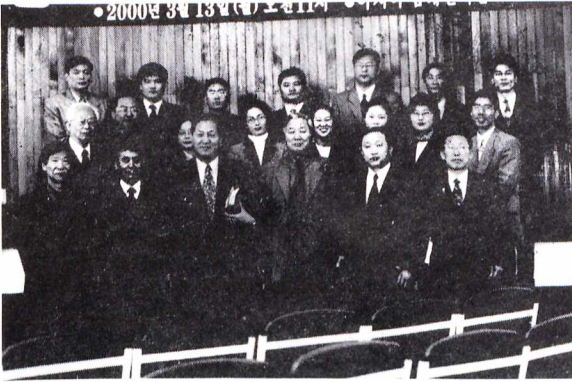
Neil Morgan and David Dodson are to come to India the end of May. They will work here with us the first part of their stay in India and then continue in South India. Please pray for safety of travel and blessings on their work.

My father spent his 92nd birthday, March 1, 1976 in a Lake City, S. C. hospital. I arrived there from India on March 6. As soon as he regained consciousness and knew I was there, he wanted me to sing for him—only one song and over and over until he was called home on March 21. The words he wanted to hear were:

"In the Beloved, God's marvelous grace,
Calls me to dwell in this wonderful place,
God sees my Saviour and, in Him, sees me,
In the Beloved, accepted and free."

(continued on page 5)

Good News From Korea



Dear honorable Promotional Director:

I pray you and all churches in Missouri have the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ always. My wife and I were appointed as FWB Korea missionaries for all Asia and Pacific area on December 10, 1998, and since the mission works were begun in Korea in August, last year, we have worked centering around Seoul with our best.

My important works are planting churches, training faithful Christian workers at our Asia FWB Theological Seminary and send them to North Korea and to Asia zone. The Korea ministry as a mission center in Asia has a displaying possibility of function to detach and send some Christian workers to other countries.

The Lord bless our mission from last August as below:

1. Established the "FWB Church For All Nations" on March 1, and now 60 believers are attended and I preach every Sunday.
2. The class of "Asia FWB Theological Seminary" began on March 13 with 17 enrolled students.
3. "The FWB National Association of Korea" was organized on March 23, and 32 ministers and 10 churches are joined now.
4. Rev. Seng Ho Choi was adopted as a missionary for China by FWB National Association of Korea.

We really need your continuing support in prayer and finances to success our mission works in Korea. If you please introduce this letter to your state meeting and ask for continuing support in prayer and finances. And if possible, please be appoint myself as a state missionary.

If you are led by the Lord to keep go on this ministry, please contact the Foreign Missions and myself, if possible.

Thank you very much and may the Lord bless you and your churches richly.

Your missionary in Korea for all Asia,

Dr. & Mrs. John Chang



Photo A: First professors and students, after finishing entrance ceremony of Asia FWB Theological Seminary

Photo B: After official formed meeting of FWB National Association of Korea

(News from India from page 4)

Our Daddy has been gone a long time. We, his family, continue to do all we can so that people in India and around the world can sing: "In the Beloved, accepted and free."

Thank you for your faithfulness in standing with us for this work in India with your prayers and support. We continue to count on you. Please do continue to pray for our children and grandchildren in U.S.A., and for those who serve with us here in India.

Lovingly in Christ,

D. Carlisle Hanna



Faith & Hope FWB Church Praise Report

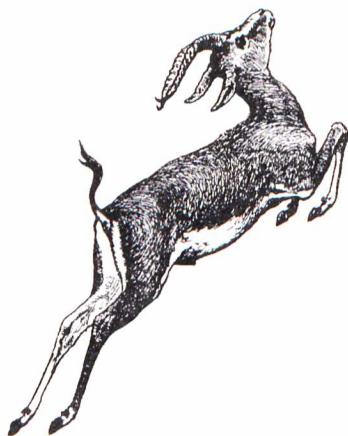
By Mrs. Gene Fly

Sunday, April 23, was a special day at Faith & Hope Free Will Baptist Church in Aurora. The pastor, Rev. Bill Swearingen and congregation had the privilege and honor of witnessing seven souls follow

their Lord in baptism. It was truly a wonderful service. We feel blessed also, that God has allowed us to be able to have a new baptistry for the church. What a great God we serve !

Lessons From Nature

By Garry Matthews



Blood trails. To a bow hunter, blood trails are as much a part of hunting as the bow and arrow. Unlike a bullet which kills by massive shock and tissue damage (often dropping an animal in its tracks), an arrow kills by hemorrhaging. The animal often walks or runs off after being shot. Therefore, becoming a good tracker is as important as being a good shot. In the bow hunter education classes I teach for the Conservation Department, every student must follow a simulated blood trail complete with "Hollywood" blood, deer hair, and broken, bloody arrow,—and find the deer in order to become certified. Through the years I have followed many blood trails. At the end of some trails lies a freezer full of venison. Other trails end with a live, slightly wounded (a minor cut that will completely heal in a couple of days), and much wiser deer that will probably die of old age. Like many things in nature, blood trails can teach us valuable lessons.

Mid-October found my son, Chad, and I on a couple of blood trails. Hard to believe, but we had both arrowed deer within five minutes of one another. At 9:23 a.m. Chad had shot a large doe that was slightly uphill from his ground blind. He saw the yellow-barred feathers protruding from the chest cavity as the doe spun and ran all out in a typical death run. A few minutes earlier a young doe ran from in front of my blind wearing my bright yellow feathers in the back portion of her chest cavity. Thirty minutes later we began blood trailing. Like many things in life, these blood trails would not be as simple as the arrow location would indicate. We did successfully locate both our deer, mine about 3:15 p.m. that afternoon, and Chad's at 11:00 a.m. the next morning. Both deer now reside in our freezers.

Following blood trails, I often think of the similarity to finding and following God's will in our lives. Sometimes blood trails are so obvious, anyone could follow them at a run. Sometimes you may even see the deer go down. There are times when God's will for our lives is also very obvious. We may not like where His will is leading us, but it is obvious, and we can move rapidly toward accomplishing His will. But what about those times when the trail becomes difficult?

When we were searching for Chad's deer, the first 200 yards there was good blood sign. Blood was sprayed on both sides of the trail, indicating that there was a hole on both sides of the chest. That is what a bow hunter strives for, complete penetration. Then we were on our hands and knees searching for pinhead sized drops of blood. We would go back to the last spot and carefully retrace our steps. Often we went on sheer instinct, following a likely path, and suddenly there would be a drop or a smear of blood on a credibly she covered nearly 600 yards! She should have gone down in less than 50 yards! There was genuine heartfelt thanks offered to the Lord—and a young man felt vindi-

leaf. The thought ran through my mind as I was on my knees turning over leaves, and looking for the slightest scuff mark or indentation—DO I, OR WOULD I SPEND AS MUCH TIME ON MY KNEES SEEKING GOD'S WILL IN MY LIFE? Ouch! That rock of conviction sure hurts tender knees! Finally, we ran completely out of sign. We had to leave so Chad could go to work. Tomorrow morning we would pick up where we left off. We marked the spot and retraced our steps. There was a lot of blood, and there was the broken back half of the arrow with bubbles of blood indicating a lung hit, but the doe had already covered about 400 yards.

How could that be? I quizzed Chad hard, but his conviction was unshakeable—the shot was good—right behind the left front leg! I wonder if our faith in God's guidance is that unshakeable? Tomorrow our eyes would be fresh, we would have new energy, and new determination!

By 10:30 the next morning we had found no new blood or tracks. We had covered all likely deer trails—up and down the creek bed, in bedding thickets, even searching the most unlikely areas. It seemed we had walked miles and we were exhausted! We had gone way past all reasonable expectations! The day was warming up and if we could not locate the deer, if it was dead, spoilage would soon become a factor. We got back together and took a 15 minute break to compare notes, and to decide what to do. I asked Chad what he wanted to do. We could give up and leave feeling like we had done everything possible to locate the doe. I asked Chad if he had any ideas—at this point I really didn't know what else we could do. I really began to have doubts if the shot placement was as good as he thought it was. I really began to doubt if the doe was dead, even with all that blood she had lost—I just couldn't understand it. We talked a few minutes and I sensed the frustration that was going through Chad's mind. Again he said, "I know she has to be dead, but I don't know how she made it this far!"

Once again I quizzed him about the shot, and also the direction from which the deer had come before he shot. "Well I have known a couple of wounded deer that tried to circle back to where they came from before being shot," I said. That was one place we hadn't tried, because it would have involved her climbing a steep ridge. Deer that are critically wounded do not run uphill—anyone who has hunted very long knows that! Besides, since the first 100 yards she had moved steadily downhill, and she would have to make a sharp right turn—and she had been going in a straight line the last 300 yards. Before trying this long shot, we paused and prayed once again for God's guidance.

While Chad fought his way uphill through a tangle of wild rose, I worked my way through a thicket of head high saplings that would eventually lead around the end of the ridge. This would be the long way around, and I could not imagine the doe being able to go this far if she was hit the way Chad thought—but at least it was not uphill. I stepped into a small clearing that was less than 15 yards wide, and at the far side lay Chad's doe—over 100 yards from the last

(continued on page 8)

Missouri Bible Institute Enrollment 25

MBI Instructors Rick Dablemont, Ken Dodson, and Gary Fry led twenty-five students to completion of course work during the Spring semester; seven at Cuba, eleven at Park Hills, and seven at Mountain Grove. MBI will grant one (30 credit hour) Bible College Certificate through Hillsdale FWB College and other Christian Worker Certificates at the FWB State Meeting on June 7.

By participating in MBI, students may earn college credit through Hillsdale FWB College or take the courses on an audit basis. The year 2000 marks the seventh year of the ministry of MBI and is sponsored by the Christian Education Board of the Missouri State Association.



Park Hills



Cuba

Fall semester classes begin in late August at each site. For information regarding enrollment, call 1-800-471-4090.

Fall semester classes begin in late August at each site. For information regarding enrollment, call 1-800-471-4090.



Mountain Grove

Those shown in the MBI photos are as follows:

Park Hills: (Front row - left to right) Mark Archambo, Margaret Thomas, Phyliss Meador, Richard Barker. (Back Row) Bill Skaggs, Mike Pirtle, Bob Theabeau, John Copeland, Steve Rehkop, Ken Dodson.

Cuba: (Front) Judith Schroeder, Lou Quinlan, J.J. Dablemont (Back Row) Keith Howdeshell, Greg Quinlan, Gary Mace. Not pictured: Kathy Smart. Course of study: Systematic Theology 2

Mountain Grove: (left to right) John Phinney, Wayne Fry, Melvin Moon, Travis Watkins, Gene Crewse, Russell McDaris. Not pictured: Dennis McGinley Course of study: "Non-Christian American Religions"



Bible College Teachers Honored

As the 1999-2000 school year neared its close, several Free Will Baptist Bible College faculty members were honored in a variety of ways.

Three were named to the 2000 edition of Who's Who Among America's Teachers, which recognized about 5% of the nation's top teachers. They are:

- Suzann Harris (Teacher Education)
- Byron Deel (Physical Education)
- Tom McCullough (Missions)

Each was nominated by a former student as "a teacher who made a difference." Students who make nominations must, themselves, be listed in Who's Who Among American High School Students or be on The National Dean's List.

Mrs. Harris has also been recognized by Junior Achievement of Middle Tennessee, who awarded her its Bronze Leadership Award for her pioneering efforts in chartering the College Strategy Partnership between Junior Achievement and Free Will Baptist Bible College. Since the partnership began in the Fall of 1998, FWBBC students have taught the Junior Achievement curriculum in 265 elementary classes helping to reach over 5,800 students with the message of free enterprise and the importance of education.

On February 1, Coach Deel was promoted to Major in the Tennessee Army National Guard.

Michael Karouno, a member of the English faculty, has been notified that his essay, A summary Riposte: Frost's Flight of the Spirit at Kitty Hawk, will be published in a forthcoming issue of The Robert Frost Review, edited by Earl Wilcox.

We congratulate each of these fine teachers for these well-deserved recognitions.



Hillsdale FWB College Highlights

From The President's Desk

President Carl Cheshier reports, "Our Capital Campaign to raise \$3.5 million for the proposed Chapel/Classroom Building and at least \$500,000 in an endowment is almost halfway with \$1.9 million in cash and commitments. We are excited about recent gifts and commitments of \$270,000."

Dean's List

The Dean's List is an honor roll listed each semester of students who have carried an academic load of 12 hours or more, have maintained a 3.25 grade point average with no grade lower than a "C" for that semester, and have passed Chapel. The following Missouri students made the Fall 1999 Dean's List:

Kelli Dugger - Hartville, Missouri

Kimberly Walker - Grandview, Missouri

Christy Zimmerman - Liberal, Missouri

(Lessons from Nature continued from page 6)

blood sign! She had died in mid-stride, probably less than a minute from the time Chad shot her. Sure enough, there was the entry hole right behind the left front leg, and a hole mid-chest on the right-hand side where the broadhead came out—just like Chad said. A perfect double lung shot—yet incated!

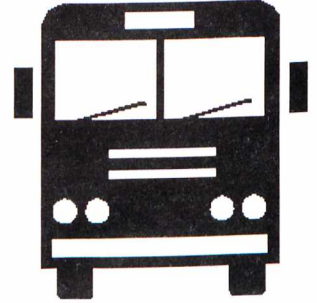
Then it struck me, and really bothered me—just 15 minutes before, I had been ready to give up—to call it a lost cause! At times I had been within 30-50 yards of her yesterday and earlier this morning, but I was so sure she wouldn't go that direction! Chad's conviction made me rehash the events one more time and recall a trait of some wounded deer to try to circle back to an area of safety.

Do we sometimes give up on finding God's plan for our lives when just a little more earnest searching might yield success? Maybe we need to look in a different direction. Are we so set in our ways that we fail to recognize God's change of direction for us? God often tested the patriarchs of old—changing the direction of their lives. Why should we expect to be different? Chad's unshakeable faith in his shot placement prompted me to try one last time. Is our faith in God unshakeable enough to prompt us to go on when our mind and body says "no more?" I know the material lessons Chad learned through this experience will serve him well throughout his life. I hope and pray the spiritual lessons will also become permanently ingrained in both our lives! What about yours?

"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him and he shall direct thy paths." Proverbs 3:5,6

Ride Chartered Bus to National

You can travel to the National Association on a new 56 passenger bus which has been chartered from the Reid Travel Service.



- Cost for round trip: \$139 plus a small fee for the driver's motel expense.
- Price includes a side trip to the Grand Canyon.
- To reserve a seat or to obtain more information, call Wanda Smith.

Home phone: 417-741-7366

Work phone: 417-924-3291

Marie Alberta Graham April 15, 1914 - March 8, 2000

Marie Alberta Graham, born April 15, 1914 at Mine LaMotte, Missouri to Clarence Albert and Esther Maud Graham Hovis, departed this life on March 8, 2000 at Madison Medical Center at the age of 85 years old. On March 23, 1935 she was united in marriage to Robert Earl Graham, Sr.

Preceding her in death were her parents, her husband, and a son, Robert Earl Graham, Jr. along with a brother, Lindell Hovis.

She is survived by one son, Lindell Graham (and wife, Margie) of St. Charles; two daughters, Thelma (and husband, Vernon Sikes), and Mary (and husband, Darrell Henson) of Fredericktown; two sisters, one brother, 14 grandchildren, 24 great-grandchildren, and three great-great grandchildren.

Sister Graham was a member of Copper Mines Free Will Baptist Church, where she served as church clerk for 29 years. She also taught Sunday school, helped with VBS, and was always there with her basket of food and lasagna when dinners were served.

She had been employed as a clerk at Blair's Department Store, and later made drapes from her home at Copper Mines. After moving into a smaller home, she spent a lot of time volunteering at the Senior Center, visiting with family and friends. Each of her family members cherish the quilts that "Grandma Marie" made especially for them.

Dorothy Marie Cordia September 30, 1933 - January 30, 2000

Dorothy Marie Cordia (Griggs), age 66, passed away on Sunday, January 30, 2000 due to cancer. Sister Cordia had been a member of the Richwoods Free Will Baptist Church in Richwoods, Missouri from 1951 until her death.

Stand!

At Times When All That Is Left Is To Believe

By Ben Durbin

Do you often wonder why we should stand for Christ at all times, even when you have nothing left to stand upon? A few months ago, I found out why, the hard way. As I was growing up I knew this family . . .

Their name was the John McClure family. They were missionaries to the needy country of Mexico, currently working in Saltillo, Coahuila. This location was one of the two places where they had already planted churches. God had blessed this family for their hard labors with these churches, some souls, and many helpful friends. In Mexico, they were serving Christ with full dedication to their missions calling, but things weren't always that great. Being a mission family wasn't easy. This field of work meant hard dedication of continually working on the church and the willingness to work through rough times because of multiple problems. One main problem with the missions is finding funding for the work. The McClure family was always striving to find and keep funding to work for Christ. They needed funding to build the churches, to plant a family, to find a home, and to work on their truck along with many other things. And possibly, the second main problem that they faced in the field is not finding time to rest causing health problems. These two problems helped lead to a changing point in their lives as well as mine.

The McClure family had served Christ for many, many years, and it was time for a much needed break. Most of the children had already grown up and some of them were already taking on responsibilities of their own and starting their own families. It was time for them to take a break and get some rest, regain some funding, and refresh their game plan for Mexico. What they didn't know was that their entire life was about to be changed. God was about to take one of their precious sons out of this world to be with Him.

Their son, Jerrod McClure was one of the most cheerful, loving people you would ever meet. Jerrod always knew how to have fun, while being able to stay the strongest of Christians. Due to his overwhelming ability to have fun, he ended up losing a lot of sleep. Early one morning when he was driving his truck for work, Jerrod met his fate. He either passed out, fell asleep, blacked out, or something to that extent. Jerrod's truck ended up traveling over a few lanes and ended up hitting head-on with on-coming traffic. Jerrod fell asleep that morning, and woke up in Heaven.

Being one of Jerrod's friends, I was asked to be a pallbearer at his funeral. His funeral became a point in my life

that I will never forget. At his funeral I questioned to myself why God would allow such a strong Christian, a missionary, a young man that had made a huge impact on this world, to die this way. I also questioned how the family would react to the whole situation. Whether they would still stand for Christ.

His funeral was a touching one. It began with a tape of Jerrod singing in both Spanish and English along with his sister. Needless to say, I was moved. The point came along preach and say a few words. The minister stood up in front of the crowd and turned to a scripture in the book of Job. The scripture was Job 1:21 which says, "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD."

I sunk down into my seat as the minister spoke those words. I didn't want to hear them. I didn't want God to have taken Jerrod out of this world, and all I was to Jerrod was a friend. His family had lost everything. They were in the United States away from their mission field. They were facing many, many problems, and now their son had died. I looked over at them during the funeral as the minister spoke and something began to happen. The second time the minister had said, "the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD," Jerrod's parents began repeating what he said. All of a sudden they were waving their hands and praising God. About the third or fourth time the minister repeated the verse, the whole congregation, including myself, was crying, but shouting "the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD."

You see, the McClure family had absolutely nothing left. Because of funding, health, and family growing-up problems, the mission field was fading away. They were pressed up against their backs and the only thing they had left was to believe. In that same situation, I don't know what I would have done. But they stood up for Christ and praised God!

We need to stand for Christ at all times! Even when the only thing left is to believe. You never know when you are going to die, and you never know who may be watching you!

Job 1:21: "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD."

Keep believing in what you know is true! Stand up for Christ at all times and make a difference! My life has been changed by a family willing to stand for Christ. Would you please stand at all times? It is our duty even when all that is left is to believe.



WORSHIP SERVICE AVERAGES

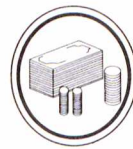
January 2000 - June 2000

Churches:	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
Belton	44	49	59	
Buffalo 1st	75	91	84	105
Calvary Chapel	241	247	238	
Calvary Fellowship	287	317		
Cape Girardeau	58	50	52	70
Copper Mines	57	63	59	
Cuba	166	147		140
Columbia	30		38	37
Crossroads - Wentzville		63	83	
DeSoto	* 192	* 201	* 228	
Fredericktown 1st	37	52		54
Hannibal	55	57	59	
Hannon	132	124	154	
Harmony - Parkville	89	91		
Hartville	* 102	* 105	156	158
Hopewell	37	46	40	43
Houston	* 50	* 46	* 46	* 47
Hurryville	105	111	117	
Lebanon FWB	70	80	72	88
Mill Creek	79	94	89	100
Mt. Pisgah	73	77	83	74
Myrtle	32	34	37	40
New Life - Licking	73	66	78	70
Oak Hill	32	25	28	
O'Fallon 1st	114	93	122	132
Ozark 1st	157	162	203	172
Oskaloosa		18		17
Parkview - Desloge		102	115	
Pleasant Hill	* 55		63	48
Purdy	76	70		70
Richwoods	34	32		
Rock Chapel	* 40		* 44	* 43
Rolla 1st	* 28	39	42	51
Springfield 1st	131	142	146	
Thayer	* 122			215
Trinity	* 64	* 73	100	104
Union Grove	122	139	142	
United	541	537	625	555
Willow Springs	61	59	74	67

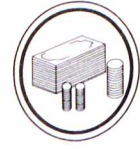
This is only a partial listing. There are 184 FWB churches in MO. Each church is encouraged to send in their Worship Service avg. each month. (* S.S. Avg.)

Youth Minister Position Open

The Cuba Free Will Baptist Church will have a ministerial position open for a Teen/Youth Minister in mid-summer. This currently is a part-time salaried position with housing provided. For information, contact Pastor Rick Dablemont at the church at (573) 885-3543 or at (573) 885-7917.



Financial Report April 2000



Cooperative Disbursements

April 2000 \$49,594.86

18.50% MO St Missions \$9,175.05
 17.50% Executive Office 8,679.10
 3.00% General Fund 1,487.85
 .50% Show-Me Plan 247.96
 8.50% Youth Camp Bd 4,215.56
 3.50% Y. Camp Restricted 1,735.82
 2.00% Youth Min. Bd. 991.90
 2.00% C.E. Bd 991.90
 2.00% Senior Adult Min Bd .. 991.90
 9.00% MO Retirement 4,463.54

30.50% \$15,126.43

National Ministries, Hillsdale and
 California Christian College
 Foreign Missions Board
 National Home Missions
 Same Allocation
 FWBBC
 Hillsdale FWB College
 Executive Department
 Layman's Board
 Radio & TV Commission
 Theological Commission
 Historical Commission
 Board of Retirement
 1.00% CCC (151.26)

3.00% Conf. Center Fd 1,487.85

Total \$49,594.86

Co-op

Amity \$229.40
 Aulsbury Chapel \$341.52
 Aulsbury Chapel \$290.34
 Bailey \$203.00
 Bailey Chapel \$210.00
 Belton \$305.50
 Berean \$40.00
 Bethel - El Dorado Springs \$71.83
 Bethel - Northview \$252.00
 Black Oak \$289.30
 Blue Springs \$120.00
 Buffalo 1st \$100.00
 Byrd \$133.00
 Calvary Chapel \$1,056.78
 Cape Girardeau 1st \$357.95
 Carthage \$313.63
 Central \$706.22
 Central \$933.06
 Christ Chapel \$322.02
 Clifton \$53.93
 Copper Mines \$488.10
 Cornerstone - Mtn. Gr \$447.65
 Crossroads - Wentzville \$873.04
 Cuba \$783.00
 DeSoto 1st \$1,600.00
 Emmanuel (CO) \$72.69
 F & H - Aurora \$69.30
 Faith & Hope - Will. Spgs \$158.72
 Farmington \$2,979.00
 Farmington 1st \$3,012.78
 Fordland \$655.68

Fredericktown 1st \$293.00
 Freeman Chapel \$494.38
 Friendship \$360.15
 Grace \$1,551.00
 Grant Avenue \$1,343.17
 Greenfield \$262.00
 Hannibal \$400.00
 Hannon \$840.06
 Hartville \$877.00
 Hopewell \$184.00
 Houston 1st \$317.38
 Hurryville \$591.03
 Jackson \$185.48
 Joplin 1st \$592.60
 Kirksville 1st \$8.00
 Koshkonong \$158.00
 Lebanon 1st \$884.83
 Lone Star \$44.90
 Macedonia - Niangua \$85.72
 Meris Chapel \$120.00
 Mill Creek \$413.00
 Mine LaMotte \$90.18
 Mountain Grove 1st \$1,401.92
 Mt. Pisgah \$365.00
 Mt. Zion - Gower \$56.20
 Neosho 1st \$95.00
 New Hope - Fredericktown \$70.00
 New Life - Licking \$394.73
 North Five \$97.90
 Oak Grove - Mt. Grove \$188.69
 O'Fallon 1st \$1,024.00
 Olivet \$350.00
 Overland \$110.00
 Ozark 1st \$1,448.70
 Park Hills 1st \$958.57
 Parkview \$590.71
 Pleasant Hill - Thayer \$229.86
 Pleasant Home \$333.11
 Pleasant Ridge \$75.00
 Potosi 1st \$158.50
 Republic \$100.00
 Richwoods 1st \$596.00
 Rock Chapel \$375.44
 Rolla 1st \$253.00
 Royal Oak \$100.00
 Seymour \$328.00
 Smyrna \$69.00
 Springfield \$236.00
 Springfield 1st \$1,127.13
 St. Peters \$878.00
 Stockton \$183.70
 Thayer \$1,010.00
 Trinity \$996.91
 Union Grove \$480.00
 Union Light \$136.00
 United \$1,766.67
 Unity \$500.00
 Verdella \$544.95
 Viburnum \$395.00
 Victory - Alton \$339.09
 Victory - K. C. \$1,786.81
 Waynesville 1st \$303.25
 Wilderness \$917.20
 Willow Springs - Mt. Grove ... \$209.49
 Wolf Creek \$450.01
Total \$49,594.86

Show-Me Plan

Aulsbury Chapel	\$90.00
Aulsbury Chapel	\$150.00
Barker, Rev. J.	\$15.00
Beacon	\$325.00
Belton	\$165.00
Berean	\$30.00
Berry, R.	\$15.00
Bethel - El Dorado	\$193.68
Bethel - Festus	\$45.00
Bethlehem	\$30.00
Big Creek	\$55.00
Bishop, B. J.	\$15.00
Black Oak	\$30.00
Buffalo 1st	\$60.00
Buxton, G.	\$30.00
Calvary Chapel - Buffalo	\$120.00
Cartee, J.	\$15.00
Central	\$360.00
Central	\$380.00
Chism, B.	\$10.00
Chrisman, M.	\$30.00
Copper Mines	\$150.00
Copper Mines - Teens	\$30.00
Copper Mines - Yg. Adult	\$15.00
Cornerstone - Mtn. Gr	\$324.43
Cuba	\$210.00
Darnell, W.	\$15.00
DeSoto 1st	\$497.50
DeSoto 1st - Audit Class	\$15.00
DeSoto Yg. Adult Class	\$45.00
Faith & Hope - W.S.	\$60.00
Farmington 1st	\$630.00
Farmington 1st	\$820.00
Fordland	\$210.00
Fourth	\$90.00
Fredericktown 1st	\$150.00
Freeman Chapel	\$540.00
Garrett, R.	\$15.00
Gospel Light	\$825.00
Grace	\$530.00
Graham, S.	\$15.00
Grant Ave.	\$380.00
Greenfield	\$180.00
Hannibal - WNAC	\$15.00
Hannon	\$1,040.06
Happy Hill	\$30.00
Harris, F.	\$45.00
Hartville	\$240.00
Houston 1st	\$307.00
Hurryville	\$305.00
Hurryville Sr. Adult Class	\$19.00
Jackson	\$35.00
Joplin 1st	\$93.00
Kirksville 1st	\$35.50
Leadington	\$214.00
Lebanon 1st	\$150.00
Macedonia - Purdy	\$1,000.00
Maggart, D.	\$45.00
Matthews, G.	\$350.00
Merl's Chapel	\$200.00
Mill Creek	\$105.00
Mill Creek Young Adult	\$15.00
Mine La Motte	\$45.00
Missouri Womans Aux.	\$482.89
Mountain Grove 1st	\$575.00
Mt. Pisgah	\$75.00
Mt. Zion - Thayer	\$30.00
Neosho 1st	\$180.00
New Home - Hartville	\$150.00
New Hope - Fredericktown	\$105.00
New Life - Licking	\$179.60
New Life - Monett	\$75.00
Noel, D.	\$15.00
Oak Grove - Houston	\$15.00
O'Fallon 1st	\$315.00
Ozark 1st	\$40.00
Park Hills 1st	\$287.58
Parkview - Desloge	\$337.20
Pinkerton, J.	\$45.00

Pleasant Gr - Anderson	\$135.00
Pleasant Home	\$90.00
Pleasant Ridge - Urbana	\$50.00
Purdy	\$285.00
Richardson, O.	\$15.00
Richwoods	\$52.50
Rock Chapel	\$240.00
Rogers, B.	\$15.00
Rolla 1st	\$30.00
Royal Oak	\$120.00
Ruble N.	\$45.00
Springfield 1st	\$565.00
St. Louis Assn.	\$123.50
St. Peters	\$180.00
Thayer	\$205.00
Thomas, E.	\$30.00
Trinity	\$510.00
Union Light	\$120.00
United - West Plains	\$577.56
Unity	\$75.00
Verdella	\$974.95
Viburnum	\$95.00
Victory - Alton	\$339.09
Victory - K.C.	\$480.00
Walker, H. Jr.	\$60.00
Waynesville 1st	\$938.09
West Plains 1st	\$155.00
White, R.	\$15.00
Willow Springs - Mtn. Gr	\$85.00
Willow Springs 1st	\$150.00
Total	\$21,862.13

Foreign Missions

Beacon	\$238.00
Cape Girardeau	\$143.18
Central	\$5.00
Central	\$5.00
Chapman, A.	\$20.00
Cuba	\$35.00
Fordland	\$5.00
Fourth	\$50.00
Gospel Light	\$60.00
Grant Ave.	\$66.00
Haney, A.	\$10.00
Harmony Fellowship (CO)	\$144.00
Houston 1st	\$30.00
Joplin 1st	\$10.00
Lebanon 1st	\$210.00
Lewis, D.	\$10.00
Minor, K.	\$10.00
Mountain Grove 1st	\$5.00
Neosho 1st	\$15.00
O'Fallon 1st	\$10.00
Rock Chapel	\$28.00
Thayer	\$65.00
Trinity	\$248.30
Union Light	\$10.00
Victory - K.C.	\$80.00
Total	\$1,512.48

Nat'l Home Missions

Beacon	\$50.00
Belton	\$60.50
Blue Springs	\$30.00
Bob Thebeau (DeSoto 1st)	\$5.00
Brenda King (DeSoto 1st)	\$5.00
Bud Rogers (DeSoto 1st)	\$20.00
Carthage	\$45.00
Cuba	\$105.00
DeSoto 1st	\$726.00
DeSoto 1st - Auditorium Class	\$10.00
F & H - Aurora	\$69.30
Farmington	\$205.00
Farmington 1st	\$210.00
Fordland	\$45.00
Fourth	\$50.00
Gospel Light	\$80.00
Grace	\$143.00
Grant Avenue	\$166.32

Hannon	\$504.03
Harmony Fellowship	\$169.00
Hartville	\$100.00
Houston 1st	\$45.00
Jackson	\$30.00
Jerry Rader	\$20.00
Joplin 1st	\$20.00
Macedonia - Purdy	\$2,500.00
Merls Chapel	\$60.00
Mountain Grove 1st	\$50.00
Mt. Pisgah	\$25.00
Nathan Ruble	\$10.00
Neosho 1st	\$115.00
New Home - Hartville	\$10.00
New Life - Monett	\$50.00
O'Fallon 1st	\$48.00
Ozark 1st	\$20.00
Park Hills 1st	\$205.86
Pleasant Home	\$97.49
Richwoods 1st	\$81.00
Rock Chapel	\$115.88
Thayer	\$165.00
Trinity	\$25.00
Union Light	\$96.00
United	\$150.00
United Youth Group	\$170.00
Unity	\$50.00
Verdella	\$10.00
Viburnum	\$151.00
Victory - K. C.	\$130.00
West Plains 1st	\$105.00
Wolf Creek	\$75.00
Total	\$7,428.38

State Home Missions

Belton	\$50.00
Berean	\$15.00
Central	\$40.00
Central	\$40.00
Copper Mines	\$60.00
DeSoto 1st	\$90.00
DeSoto 1st - Children's Ch	\$20.00
Farmington 1st	\$125.00
Home Miss (forwarded)	\$5.00
Gospel Light	\$80.00
Grace	\$55.00
Larry Wormington	\$30.00
Lebanon Bible & Book St	\$288.75
Mountain Grove 1st	\$25.00
O'Fallon 1st	\$48.00
Ozark 1st	\$10.00
Pleasant Ridge	\$20.00
Richard White (DeSoto 1st) ...	\$10.00
Thayer	\$50.00
United	\$25.00
Waynesville 1st	\$100.00
Total	\$1,186.75

Youth Camp

Cornerstone - Mtn. Grove	25.00
Ozark 1st	10.00
Thayer	50.00
Lebanon Bible & Book Store ..	157.50
New Home - Hartville	10.00
Mt. Pisgah	15.00
Mountain Grove 1st	10.00
Buffalo 1st	50.00
Hartville	10.00
Trinity	14.00
Berean	15.00
Willow Springs - Mtn. Grove	10.00
Rolla 1st	20.00
Verdella	10.00
DeSoto 1st	55.00
Blue Springs	240.00
Park Hills 1st	36.61
Wolf Creek	25.68
Total	\$763.79

Camp Development Fund

Rock Chapel	200.00
West Plains 1st	70.00
Monett 1st	266.76
Houston 1st	100.00
Joyful Learning Cen (Festus) ..	100.00
Total	\$736.76

Youth Ministries Board

Lebanon Bible & Book Store ..	113.75
Total	\$113.75

Senior Adult Ministries

Lebanon Bible & Book Store ..	113.75
Total	\$113.75

C. E. Board

Lebanon Bible & Book Store ..	113.75
Total	\$113.75

Free Will Baptist Bible College

Beacon	4.00
Thayer	50.00
Mountain Grove 1st	10.00
Nathan Ruble	15.00
Farmington 1st	264.00
Verdella	108.99
DeSoto 1st	40.00
Total	\$491.99

Hillsdale Free Will Baptist College

Beacon	303.00
Thayer	50.00
Grant Avenue	8.00
Joplin 1st	75.00
Hannon	50.00
Farmington 1st	205.00
Victory - Kansas City	134.34
Victory - Kansas City	"Have
A Heart"	130.15
Neosho 1st	50.00
Total	\$1,005.49

California Christian College

Farmington 1st	156.00
Total	\$156.00

Trula Cronk Home for Children

New Life - Licking	107.39
Belton	100.00
Hannon	100.00
Unity	10.00
Farmington 1st	30.00
DeSoto 1st	80.00
New Hope - Fredericktown	30.00
Park Hills 1st	135.00
Total	\$592.39

Rev. John McClure

Gospel Light	80.00
Thayer	5.00
Carthage	15.00
Mountain Grove 1st	37.50
Trinity	10.00
DeSoto 1st	10.00
Kirksville 1st	15.00
Grace	15.00
Total	\$187.50

Steve Smith

Farmington 1st	10.00
DeSoto 1st	55.00
Total	\$65.00

Cornerstone FWB Church

(Brian Brinkhoff)	
Merls Chapel	50.00
Total	\$50.00

Dr. Mark Braisher Newsletter

Home Missionary to Overland Park, KS

Dear Friend,

Welcome to the ministry of Southern Hills Free Will Baptist Church! We are a mission work of the Free Will Baptist Home Missions Department. This mission is in the beginning stages and is poised for growth. Located in the heart of the growth of Overland Park, Kansas, one of the fastest growing cities in the country and a suburb of Kansas City, this is the kind of place where churches should be built. God is bringing thousands of people to this area every year. When you look across the countryside there is new construction as far as the eye can see. It is amazing!

Let me tell you about our family. Our family is made up of myself, my wife, Shelly, and our two children, 11-year old Jeremy, and 6-year old Blake Elizabeth. My wife and I are both natives of Oklahoma where we met, married, and graduated from Hillsdale Free Will Baptist College. We furthered our studies in the north Kansas City area where my wife earned her B. S. degree in Elementary Education at William Jewell College, and I earned M. Div. And D. Min. degrees at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. We are glad to settle and invest our lives in this part of God's world and in this group of God's people.

On January 1, our family began its ministry here in this exciting region. With about 25 people, some land, and a rented facility, we are off and running. Already souls are being baptized and families are joining the church. God is doing great things among us.

What can you do to be a part? You can support us with your prayers. Pray that God will continue to grow His church here and that He will open doors for evangelism. You may also give financially. Funds are needed to provide for my support, as well as funds for the building fund and advertising. We will build a facility as soon as God provides these funds. In this area of rapid growth, it is essential that an attractive and quality facility be built as soon as the church is capable of maintaining it. The advertising fund will allow us to make our presence known both by door-to-door and by mass mail. Your support is essential for growth.

Please understand that we are deeply convicted that God has called us to Overland Park. For several months prior to this door opening, God began to deal with us concerning it. We intend to invest our lives in these people and this area. We are convinced that God is about to do great things among us. We'd love for you to be a part of it. Please send your gift to Free Will Baptist Home Missions and designate it for either the "Braisher Account," the "Braisher / Southern Hills Free Will Baptist Building Fund," or the "Braisher / Southern Hills Advertising Fund." Your support will be greatly appreciated and wisely used. We commit to keeping our supporters informed as to where we are and to wisely use all that is entrusted to us.

If you are a new supporter of this ministry, or if you are continuing your support of the Overland Park, KS mission—Thank you. May God bless you for your sacrifice and commitment to the Great Commission.

Sincerely in Christ,
Mark Braisher

MISSOURI STATE ASSN. OF FREE WILL BAPTISTS

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Lebanon, MO 65536

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