

# Convention News

## 2008 FREE WILL BAPTIST NATIONAL CONVENTION

WEDNESDAY, JULY 23, 2008

CHARLESTON, WEST VIRGINIA

### WHAT WE DID...

#### THE CONVENTION NEWS FOLLOWS ONE FAMILY THROUGH THE 2008 CONVENTION

Meet the Kernodles [ker-NO-dulls]. After four days in Charleston, you may have seen them around. They are one of hundreds of families who made the trek to West Virginia this week. Just your average family at your average convention.

During a week packed with worship services, competition, and outreach opportunities, we followed this family of five to get their perspective as they juggled it all—on only four pairs of legs.

Michael, Jennifer, and their three children, Trevor (17), Shelby (8), and Abby (6) have spent the last several months preparing for this week. The children have been hard at work, practicing their competition pieces, while Michael and Jennifer have been bracing themselves for a full week with three kids. The situation was made even more difficult when a car accident put both of the father's legs in a cast, forcing Michael to navigate the convention on wheels.

Despite the challenges, the Kernodles left their home in Nashville, TN, to attend their first national convention, excited about what lay ahead.

For this family, a week in West Virginia was no vacation. With two children competing in three categories, the Kernodles had plenty to keep them busy.

Son Trevor, along with a few other teenagers from his church, competed in the group drama category. Older daughter Shelby sang a vocal solo and later contributed her voice to a vocal trio. Not to mention the several stops they made to the practice room before their time to compete arrived.

In typical Free Will Baptist fashion, the Kernodles stayed busy in between competitions by chatting and catching up with old friends from their home in Virginia.

No doubt the restaurants in Charleston extend past the Town Center Mall, but the Kernodle family did not have time to explore. The food court across the street received plenty of business from Michael, Jennifer, and their children over the past four days.

When they decided to eat lunch there on Monday, Jennifer saw the crowds and said what most of us were thinking: "It looks like everyone else at the convention has the same idea."

Looking to make the most of his trip to Charleston, Trevor got involved with Reach That Guy. On Wednesday, he and his youth group helped lend a hand to the Sojourner's Job Readiness Center.

The Kernodles were able to spend some time in the Exhibit Hall this week too. This was a favorite spot for youngest daughter Abby, who was thrilled to collect the countless goodies and giveaways.

Every evening, the family split up to attend the various services. Though Abby would wisely use this time to let the activities of the day catch up with her and crash, her sister Shelby enjoyed the children's services, especially the singing.

Trevor took part in the teen services along with more than a thousand others. It was a combination of the moving praise and the worship and the excellent preaching that kept him coming back each night. On Tuesday night, he and some friends took in the lighter side of the convention with the comedy show *Mike at the Mic*, which he really opened up about, saying, "It was good."

Michael and Jennifer were blown away by the music and speakers at the adult services. Never having attended one before now, their expectations were exceeded when they saw how God moved.

As the week reaches its conclusion and the Kernodles make their way to the awards ceremony, we welcome another family who joins the thousands of Free Will Baptist Convention alumni. Unlike anything they expected, every second of the convention was a huge success from this family's perspective. In fact, they have already begun planning their trip to Cincinnati next July. Will they see you there?



Above: Michael and Jennifer Kernodle, with children Abby, Shelby, and Trevor (left to right)



### REACHED THAT GUY

OVER A THREE DAY PERIOD, 464 Free Will Baptists volunteered their time to the citizens of Charleston. They donated more than 2763 hours to worthy organizations like the Ronald McDonald House, Salvation Army, and the local Covenant House homeless shelter. Eighty-six units of blood were donated as well.

The Reach That Guy program, fueled largely by students, continues to grow. RTG began its ministry in Fort Worth in 1996.

## 25 YEARS OF TRUTH & PEACE Student Conference Makes a Lasting Impact

IF YOU HAVE BEEN TO the National Youth Conference in the last 25 years, you have seen them stationed at the doors of competition events, working at children's activities, and praying with teens who come forward during youth services. They are Truth & Peace.

Today, you can find them in pulpits around the country, on mission fields worldwide, and in your own neighborhood. They occupy board positions on a denominational level, and one is the president of a Free Will Baptist college. They are Truth & Peace.

Someone who obviously did not understand the role of purpose and impact of Truth & Peace once said, "All they do is stand around." So, in celebration of our 25th year, it is time to remind everyone what Truth & Peace is all about.

#### Truth & Peace Is Student Leadership

The summer of 1984 was a year of experimentation for Jim Lauthern, director of the Youth Department at Randall House. He left his role in publishing to create what would become the department of Student and Children's Ministry. Jim had a vision for developing leadership training for students within the denomination. His simple plan had two

parts, to start youth evangelistic teams around the country and to establish a leadership training conference called Truth & Peace.

The conference participants were students seen as leaders in their youth groups, or had potential leadership. *Truth* referred to the guy's conference, centered on the verse Psalm 91:4, "His truth shall be my shield." The girl's conference was called *Peace*, based on Ephesians 2:14, "He Himself is our peace."

That summer 50 high school students from all over the Free Will Baptist world came together for a week of training at Free Will Baptist Bible College and a week of training at Camp Cumberland (Happy Hill Acres at that time). They took a bus to the National Youth Conference in Little Rock, Arkansas. The goal was to see what would happen if high school students were given the challenge of running the National Youth Conference. The leadership skills they learned would then be put to use throughout the rest of their lives. With that in mind, the founders of the conference established the following mission:

**The Truth & Peace Student Leadership Conference exists to train, motivate, and encourage high school students to impact their world through biblical leadership.**

Their work at the National Youth Conference is simply a practical laboratory for the leadership principles taught during the first two weeks of the conference. During those weeks, students learn that God has uniquely gifted them for leadership in order to serve the denomination and the larger body of Christ.

Again this year, 84 students were challenged to find out how they can best impact their churches, friends, and families through a biblical servant leadership model. While teaching methods and materials may have changed, the purpose and mission remains the same. Truth & Peace is focused on student leadership.

#### Truth & Peace Is Missions

Each year, the conference places a high priority on the challenge of missions. The first conference featured missionaries Robert and Judy Bryan. They taught students about the call and challenge of missions.

Truth & Peace participants continued to be challenged to global action when the first Peace director, Sarah Malone, left the states to teach English in China.

The challenge continued when Sam McVay,

founding director of Truth, and his family moved to Spain to serve in Villalba.

Missionaries and mission fields have been directly affected as students are challenged each year at Truth & Peace and respond by becoming career missionaries. A highlight of each year's conference is a concert of prayer, led by International Missions staff member Neil Gilliland.

Neil remarks, "For a number of years I have been loosely connected with Truth & Peace, and I have watched firsthand the transformation that happens when students sit in quiet moments of solitude and hear the soft whisper of the Father saying, 'Will you go?'"

And they have. Truth & Peace alumni now dot the missions map. Free Will Baptist International Missions is deeply grateful for the role Truth & Peace has made in developing the next generation of missionaries."

One participant impacted by Truth & Peace is Kristi Johnson, missionary to Spain. "Truth & Peace was the beginning of many firsts for me—my first time to be so far away from home, the first time I spent time on the FWBBC campus, the first time I met Sam and June McVay. And it was the first time I saw the fellowship between Free Will Baptists across America.

Before that time, my window to the world was what my hometown in South Carolina had to offer. But the summer of 1991 changed my life. I met friends who have become lifelong partners in our ministry in Spain."

This summer, several Truth & Peace members also participated in E-TEAM missions trips around the world. These students continue the missions challenge of Truth & Peace.

### Truth & Peace Is Training

From their first moments of training, Truth & Peace students are taught to return to their world and lead in homes, youth groups, churches, and schools.

Whether students attend one year or all four, they are equipped to lead in whatever positions they encounter.

Lauren Taylor is a rising senior at the University of Arkansas, where she is a part of the percussion section in the band. "Although I have focused a lot on my own personal growth as a follower of Christ, Truth & Peace did prepare me to be a leader at my school. Not only did I feel more prepared as a leader but just as a servant for our Lord. My third year of Truth & Peace really drilled into me the fact that in order to lead, a person must learn to serve.

In my opinion, it is unnatural for a leader to have the mindset of a servant. At school, I have been

given several leadership positions and placed with people who are very difficult to serve. However, I have stuck with the idea of being a servant. At times, it is a daily battle to focus on being a servant to my peers whom I lead. However, I continually seek out the Lord's guidance and spirit of perseverance, and it has made all of the difference in the world.

If I had not received the training to work with people who are different than me with different values than mine, I do not believe I would have been able to survive the various leadership positions at my university."

### Truth & Peace Is Led by Leaders

Truth & Peace staffers are leaders in their own ministries and occupations. They include the past and present directors of the Student and Children's Ministry Division of Randall House: Jim Lauthern, Dean Jones, and Danny Conn.

Conference directors through the years include Sarah Malone, Sam McVay, Deanna Hollifield, and Allen Pointer. Former staff members continue to lead in various roles across the denomination. These include Len Davenport, Steve and Katie Greenwood, Curt and Becky Gwartney, Mike Hollifield, Lisa McGee, Donald Myers, Pam Newsome, Mike and Renee Pointer, Brad and Marilyn Sneed, Jeff Stegall, and Eric Thomsen.

Several conference alumni have returned to serve, including Mitchell Cooper, Krista Lane, and Bryan Taylor, along with current staffers Teri Deel, David Jones, Jerrod and Tyra Pilgrim, and Jill Warren. The current staff, together with Angie Deel, Jill Pointer, and Sean Warren, continue the legacy of leadership demonstrated to hundreds of students who are part of the fraternity of Truth & Peace.

The 2008 conference featured some of the strongest leaders from local youth groups in the history of the conference. They have been challenged to share their faith, given the tools to make it a priority in their lives, and this week their leadership skills have been put to the test by serving the National Youth Conference with distinction.

Truth & Peace Student Leadership Conference is now accepting applications for the 2009 conference. If you are a high school leader, or know of one in your church, visit [www.randallhouse.com](http://www.randallhouse.com) to learn how you or your student can take part. It may impact the next quarter century for the Kingdom of God.

**About the Writer:** *Allen Pointer finished his 12th year as director of Truth & Peace with the 2008 conference. In "real life," he is the youth pastor at First FWB Church in Russellville, AR.*

# Next Stop: The Buckeye State

**2009 FWB National Convention  
Cincinnati, OH / July 19-22, 2009  
"Great and Precious Promises"**

As another convention comes to a close, we can begin to look forward to what Cincinnati has in store for us in 2009. Here are some facts to consider while you plan next year's trip.

Since becoming a state in 1803, the state of Ohio has had its share of achievements. It has given us world leaders and great thinkers like William Henry Harrison, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Thomas Edison, John Glenn, and Neil Armstrong. It is home to the first gasoline-powered car and introduced America's favorite sport with the first professional baseball team, the Redstockings. Today, 200 years after its birth, Ohio offers one of its own cities to Free Will Baptists everywhere.

Cincinnati, originally (and unpopularly) known as Losantiville, was first settled in 1789 and grew slowly until Fort Washington was erected there at the end of that year. With the help of the fort (and with the city's convenient location on the Ohio River) Cincinnati's population grew rapidly, and the city became the county seat.

A thriving center for farming and meat processing, the city soon grew into a huge trading market. Not long after the Civil War, Cincinnati became the largest city in Ohio and the most densely-populated city in the United States.

In 2008, Cincinnati is the third largest city in Ohio and continues to grow. It has been acknowledged for its many economic opportunities and its low crime rate.

As Free Will Baptists prepare for their trip to the Ohioan city next summer, they can look forward to its many great sites and the beautiful riverside location it offers.

### FAST FACTS:

- Cincinnati used to be known as Porkopolis because of its meatpacking commerce.
- Population: 331,300
- Highest recorded temperature: 113 degrees Fahrenheit...on July 21, 1934
- Home to Paramount King's Island, voted the best theme park for families in the Midwest

## CONVENTION UPDATES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

### FREE Subscription

Visit the ONE Magazine booth in the Exhibit Hall and sign up to receive a free subscription to the official magazine of the denomination.

### 2009 Convention Interns

College students who would like to earn credit by serving as a convention intern in 2009, stop by the Convention Office for more information. Being a convention intern is a great experience and a great opportunity to develop leadership and management skills.

### Claim Your Prize!

Be sure to stop by the Exhibit Hall tonight to see if you are a prize winner. The Exhibit Hall will close promptly at 10:00.

### Take the Convention Home

Stop by the Convention Recordings Office (near the Grand Hall South entrance) to pick up a CD, DVD, VHS, or cassette of services and seminars. Each recording contains the complete service including music and speaker. CDs and cassettes are \$5 each; DVD and VHS are \$10 each.

### 2008 Convention Stats

At noon Wednesday, July 23, the total number of people attending this year's convention was **5738**. The number of people registered for the three separate conventions was:

National Convention .....	3321
National Youth Conference .....	3960
WNAC.....	892

### Orchestra Members Needed

If you are interested in playing in the 2009 Convention Orchestra, please see Chris Truett or visit the Music Commission Booth.

**Complimentary internet service** is being offered at the Internet Cafe near the Registration Booths in the Civic Center.

### Mission Opportunity

If you have a group who is looking for a chance to get involved with missions, the Free Will Baptist Children's Home in Eldridge, Alabama, wants your help. For more information, call Allan Austin, 205-522-0675, or Mike Nabors, 205-300-2563.

### Prayer Request

Gail Criswell, wife of Pastor Mike Criswell of Eugene, Oregon, was recently hospitalized due to life-threatening complications from surgery. A second surgery is scheduled for tomorrow. Please pray for her and her family.

### Bibles, Bracelets, Baubles

These and other items that you may have lost can be found in the registration area:

- Hampton Inn room key
- ladies bracelet
- various Bibles
- miscellaneous name badges
- children's white blazer
- small silver charm
- sunglasses with case
- child's shoe (size 11)
- one earring
- three pairs of shoes
- one ladies dress