

THE NAFWB NEWS

2019 FREE WILL BAPTIST NATIONAL CONVENTION

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Parting Words From Keith Burden

Retiring Executive Secretary Looks Back Over 17 Years in Office

Friday, September 27, will mark Keith Burden's final day in the Executive Office. As he wraps up his final convention as executive secretary, *The NAFWB News* staff gave Keith an opportunity to share a few parting thoughts with the denomination.

As you look back over your time as executive secretary, what are the milestones for the denomination?

I would say three things, although not necessarily in order of importance:

First, as a denomination, I believe we are as unified as we have ever been. I think this has much to do with my predecessors who worked hard to bring the departments and denomination together. We genuinely like one another!

Second, I am glad for the financial stability of the office and am grateful that right now, the Executive Office is on solid financial footing.

Finally, *ONE Magazine* has proven to be a tremendous asset to the denomination. It was a significant accomplishment for the departments to work together to produce a high-quality magazine for our people.

What will you miss most about serving as the executive secretary?

The short answer: meeting and building relationships with Free Will Baptists across the nation and around the world. This position allowed me to develop friendships with people I would not have met otherwise. For example, I never would have imagined that I would be in Robert Picirilli's Sunday School class, become friends with Bert and Diane Tippett, or be able to call William Smith one of my closest friends.



How many plane rides have you taken over your 18 years in the office?

To give a rough estimate, I would say just under 900 round trips. I can't even begin to imagine the number of miles I have driven. Let me just say that GPS has been a great addition to my life. I hate to admit how many times I navigated by road map and dome light after a late flight!

Can you name some of your greatest encouragers as executive secretary?

Obviously, my wife and family top the list. They have encouraged me in those moments when I wasn't sure I was doing the right thing. I would be remiss if I did not mention Philip Taylor, a member of a California church I pastored in the mid-1980s. Not long after I became executive secretary, he asked if he could do anything for me in my new role. I asked him to pray. He told me he would, and he has taken that promise seriously. He still consistently prays for me on a weekly basis, and I am grateful.

What are your plans for retirement?

I look forward to returning to the great state of Oklahoma. I'm going home. That's where my children and grandchildren live, and I look forward to spending time with them and simply being a grandpa—going to ball games, fishing, and enjoying their company.

I want to write—whatever opportunities come my way. I want to be an encourager, not a detractor, for the rising generation of fine, young leaders. Whatever doors the Lord opens, I will walk through. While I'm not looking for a high-demand, high-pressure ministry, I want to stay involved. I have no plans to sit on the sidelines and wither away. I want to be active in my local church.

What do people still not know about Keith Burden?

As a child, I had a speech impediment—stuttering. It wasn't as bad for me as it is for some, but it was tough to overcome. My high school speech teacher once told me, "You'll *never* be a public speaker." I can't help but wonder what she would think today of what I became. I know it is because the Lord helped me.

What would you like to say to the denomination as you leave the Executive Office?

First, thank you for honoring me by placing your confidence in me to fill this office. It has been one of the greatest honors of my ministry. Free Will Baptists brought the gospel to me, ordained me, educated me, and gave me the opportunity to serve.

Second, I encourage the denomination to stay true to the Word of God. We must remain unified and anchored to the Scripture and sound doctrine.

Finally, Free Will Baptists must always keep the Great Commission as our primary focus. Taking the gospel to the lost should be the reason behind *everything* we do as a denomination. Every effort should point to sharing the Good News with a lost world that needs it desperately.

Read the entire interview in the October-November issue of *ONE Magazine*.

MEET THE SPEAKER

Tom Dooley began pastoring New Road FWB Church in Austintown, Ohio, in 2002. He has also pastored Harrison FWB Church and Mt. Union Baptist Church, both in Ohio. In addition, he served as a national home missionary and director of the National Master's Men Department. He proudly boasts four grandchildren: Logan, Chase, Allison, and Madelynn.

“We’ve Gotta Go to Impact!”

Seventy-Nine Volunteers Endure the Heat to Make a Difference in Cincinnati

“Y’all need help in here?” one of the teenagers from a church hundreds of miles away asked as she stuck her head in the humid Sunday school room. She looked around and decided she may be of more service elsewhere, so she continued her hunt. She was looking to make an impact on Ambassador Church, and she wasn’t the only one. Forty volunteers (ages seven and up) were ready and willing to do whatever the pastor asked of them. Some painted two classrooms and the ceiling of a 400-person auditorium while others chopped down trees and washed the church sign. I watched as denominational leaders painted and pulled, sawed and sweated alongside church members.

The visitors weren’t the only ones making an impact, however. As I cut around baseboards with my paintbrush, I began talking with the other workers. Ms. Beverley, one of the church members at Ambassador, said, “Well, you’ve been prayed



for already; did you know that? We got together yesterday and prayed for the people who were going to show up today.”

There were not only 40 volunteers at Ambassador Church, but another 39 volunteers at Lighthouse FWB Church. Those working at Lighthouse completed a different task: canvassing the neighborhood. Workers distributed information about the church in the surrounding area. After handing out 800 flyers, Convention Moderator and Pastor Tim York expressed his pride in his youth group on Facebook, “Grateful for how our teens served during Impact today...they were troopers in the heat.”

Our workday on Saturday even made an impact on future conventions. While eating lunch (when do Free Will Baptists ever get together and not eat?), a member of the Ambassador host-church said, “You know what this means! Next year, we’ve gotta go to Impact—wherever it is.”

Want to know more? Impact is a convention-sponsored event organized by Master’s Men. Anyone can participate. Make plans now to join us in Oklahoma City, July 18, 2020 to make an eternal impact on the host city. Visit www.fwbmastersmen.org throughout the year for more details.

About the Writer: Hannah Driggers is an eighth-grade English teacher and varsity volleyball coach in Turbeville, South Carolina. She is a fan of young adult literature, good coffee, and running. Hannah is a member of the convention press team.

An Exhibit Hall for Everyone

The Exhibit Hall is a great place to visit this week. It is filled with resources, opportunities, fellowship, and everyone’s favorite—giveaways! This year, the hall has 35 vendors excited and ready to share their vision, excitement, and ideas with you. Pastors can find tools and ideas to rejuvenate churches and congregations. High school and college students can find information about perspective colleges or opportunities to serve on a mission field. Children enjoy trinkets, t-shirts, and toys. And be sure to sign up for the unique giveaways and prizes at each booth. Find something for *everyone* in the Exhibit Hall!

The Exhibit Hall also provides a great place to fellowship and visit with other people from around the denomination that you only see once a year. The convention is such a special time, and the Exhibit Hall is a big part of the experience. You will always find excitement, laughter, and fun in the hall. Stop by and give us a visit! We look forward to seeing you.

—Lauren Riggs, Exhibit Coordinator

The Exhibit Hall will be open after service tonight, and from 10:00 a.m. until 30 minutes after the evening service Wednesday.

News, Updates & Announcements

Registration will remain open Wednesday, 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., in the Elm Street Concourse of the DECC. The Exhibit Hall opens daily, 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., in Hall B of the DECC.

Give the gift of life at the annual Red Cross Blood Drive, scheduled for Wednesday, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., DECC 237-238. You are encouraged to schedule an appointment: www.hoxworth.org/groups/v3 or 800-830-1091.

Picture This. Pictures from the convention are available online each day. Find and download your favorites: nafwb.yerbyphotography.com.

Missing Something? The following items are waiting to be reunited with owners at Convention Registration:

- + Harmonica
- + Sunglasses and glasses
- + Bible - Timothy Newbury
- + Travel mug
- + Journals
- + Make-up bag
- + Miscellaneous toys

