

THE BIBLE METHODIST

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE BIBLE METHODIST CONNECTION OF CHURCHES VOLUME 53 | ISSUE 2

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE **SAVED?**

PAGE 3



FROM THE EDITOR



G. Clair Sams
Editor

Last issue the subject of salvation was introduced through material written collaboratively by Dr. David Fry, Dr. Steve Oliver and Dr. R.G. Hutchison. This issue we continue that theme with an article written by Dr. Steve Oliver. In this article he draws your attention to the fundamental focus of salvation. At the center of Christianity is the Lord Jesus Christ. Dr. Oliver clearly reminds us that it is all about Him. He does not just save us, He is salvation.

Please take time to read the material and embrace the beauty of understanding and presenting the message of Christianity to our broken world. There is no message more needed or perhaps more misunderstood than the message of Christian salvation.

In this issue of the paper you will also see and read about the Connectional Ministerial. Deepest thanks to all who made this event possible. Thanks to churches and their people who helped fund pastors and their wives attending the event. Thanks to Dr. Avery and the Conference Presidents, Blake Jones, Chris Cravens, John Parker, Darrell Stetler II and Clair Sams for their investment. Thanks to the Regional Conferences for their help in funding the event. Thanks as well to Dr. John Oswalt and Dr. Bill Ury for their ministry.

Turn to the Missions pages to see what the Lord is doing through Missions Director Tim Keep and the missionaries. Turn to the Conference pages to get a sense of the ministry happening in local churches.

On the back cover you will see information highlighting each Regional Conference's Family Camp. Take time to register and attend a family camp this summer! ■

THE BIBLE METHODIST

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WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE SAVED?

BY **DR. STEVE OLIVER**

Jesus is salvation.

At its heart, salvation is not an act, a transaction, or a doctrine—it is the Person of Jesus, both who He is and what He’s done. According to 1 Corinthians 1:30, Jesus Christ “became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption.” Not just brought us redemption, but became redemption for us. Salvation is ours in Jesus because Jesus is salvation.

This concept is difficult to grasp, especially since it’s not language that we’re used to hearing. Perhaps it would help to think about the statement, “God is love” (1 John 4:8, 16). This doesn’t just mean that God is loving, or

that God loves us, or that God is the highest example of love, or that God is the origin of love, or that God is the source of love. It means all of that, but it also means that God's character is love, that His love for us is not just an emotion or an action, it's His very nature. He loves us because that's who He is. And therefore (and this is John's point in 1 John 4) the only way to genuinely experience and show God's love is to have a personal, direct, vital connection with the One who is love.

Likewise, saying "Jesus is salvation" doesn't just mean that Jesus purchased salvation, or that He provides salvation, or that He is the source of salvation, or that He brings us salvation. It means all of that, but it also means that salvation is Jesus' very character, inseparable from who He is. When He accepted death under the curse and was resurrected to new life, He became the Savior. Not just "the one who saves," but the One who is Himself the bridge between God and man. This is why Hebrews 2:10 says that Jesus was "made perfect": salvation is not just something that Jesus did, it's who He is. His victory over sin and death is a vital aspect of His identity and nature as God-man. We have salvation, not as a "thing" that Christ gives, but only as the result of a personal, direct, vital connection with the One who is salvation.

The doctrine of union with Christ describes how we receive salvation and all the benefits that Christ brings: in a way which we cannot fully understand, the life of the believer is joined with Christ's life. We died when He died (Romans 6:6). We were resurrected with Him (Romans 6:5). He lives our life with us (Galatians 2:20). Our spiritual life is found only in Him (Colossians 3:3-4). We are saved only as we are personally joined to the One who is salvation (1 Corinthians 1:30).

Through church history, this understanding of salvation has

been ignored, overlooked and attacked. The politicized church of the Middle Ages viewed salvation as a commodity that the church dispensed to those in its favor. The Protestant Reformation restored personal faith in Jesus as the sole requirement of salvation. Soon, many came to hold a primarily judicial understanding of salvation: the sinner enters the divine court guilty of sin and deserving of condemnation, but because Jesus accepted the sinner's punishment, God declares him or her to be righteous. This is the basic idea behind the famous "Romans Road to Salvation." While the details of which verses are included vary from presentation to presentation, the Romans Road begins with the assertion that all are sinners (Romans 3:23), points out that the result of sin is death (Romans 6:23), and presents repentance and forgiveness as the answer to the problem (Romans 10:9). Many have been brought to salvation via the Romans Road.

Scripture makes it clear that repentance and forgiveness are essential to the gospel. John the Baptist preached a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins (Mark 1:4), Jesus called sinners to repent (Luke 5:32) and sent the disciples to preach repentance (Mark 6:12), Peter preached forgiveness at Pentecost (Acts 2:38), and Paul proclaimed repentance and forgiveness to both Jew and Gentile (Acts 20:21). This is the judicial aspect of salvation, and without question, it is crucial.

ACCURATE BUT INCOMPLETE

There is a weakness to this understanding of the gospel, however: while it is accurate, it is not the complete picture of salvation. There are many more images and metaphors for the gospel. In John 7, Jesus offered people water to slake their thirst; in John 6, He offered food for their hunger; in Matthew 11, He offered rest for the weary; and in John 3,

He offered rebirth into new life. But most often, He simply told people, "Follow Me" (for example, Matthew 19:21, Mark 2:14, Luke 9:59, John 21:22). In the Epistles, people are called to move from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light as in 1 Peter 2:9 and Colossians 1:13, or to change allegiance from idols to Christ as in 1 Thessalonians 1:9.

The reason that this variety is possible is that salvation is more than a declaration of divine law. Salvation is Jesus. Forgiveness is a result of being united with Him. Colossians 1:13 says that "redemption, the forgiveness of sins" is available only "in Him." Not just "from Him" or "because of what He's done," but directly "in Him."

When we reduce salvation to a matter of sin and forgiveness rather than a direct connection with Jesus, we open the door to doctrinal and practical errors. One of the most serious of these is viewing salvation as a "legal fiction" by which God sees Christ instead of us: we still live in sin, but God doesn't see it.

While Wesleyan-Arminians rightly reject this error, there's another that is harder for us to detect. We understand—rightly—that our sins are forgiven because of Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. We understand—rightly—that God has requirements and expectations of His children. But if we lose our focus on the Person of Jesus, if we think of salvation only in terms of sin and forgiveness, then we can fall into the trap of legalism—"Did I do enough to keep God happy?" "Am I living carefully enough that I'm not in danger of falling?" The Christian life can become a grinding, fearful effort rather than the joyful, loving relationship with Christ that He means it to be. And it starts with letting our focus shift off from Jesus Himself as our salvation.

REPENT AND BELIEVE

Throughout Scripture, the most consistent elements of the call to

salvation are “repent” and “believe.” These appear repeatedly, in every part of the New Testament: the Gospels, Acts, the Epistles and Revelation. The term “repent” has at its heart the idea of turning, which is why it’s used in Exodus 32:14 (KJV) for God changing His course of action. In the context of salvation, people repent from sin (Acts 8:22), from idols (1 Thessalonians 1:9), or from pagan ideas of God (Acts 17:30). The essence of repentance is not only in what we turn from, but who we turn to, and so Paul speaks of “repentance toward God” in Acts 20:21. When we view repentance only in terms of sin, we weaken the biblical understanding of salvation. Repentance is not forsaking our sins in preparation for faith: repentance is itself an act of faith, an integral part of turning toward Christ.

This explains why sometimes, in gospel presentations, “repent” is used alone (Matthew 3:2, Acts 3:19, Revelation 2:5), other times just “believe” (John 8:34, Acts 16:31, Galatians 3:22), and occasionally forgiveness is offered without reference to either (Luke 6:37). Repentance, faith and forgiveness are inseparable: a call to repent includes faith and forgiveness; an offer of forgiveness assumes repentance and faith. Peter at Pentecost could preach repentance without mentioning faith, and Paul could tell the Philippian jailer to believe without mentioning repentance, because repentance and faith are inseparable. Each presupposes the other.

Likewise, when Jesus said, “Follow Me,” this call contains within itself the idea of repentance: one had to abandon everything else to follow Him (Matthew 19:21, Luke 9:23-24). His promise of living water, of rest, of food and drink and rebirth all required the one responding to come to Him for these blessings. All of these offers included the implicit requirement of repentance, that is, of turning

from sin and turning to Him. But the focus was, and must always be, on coming to Jesus.

A QUESTION OF CULTURE

On deeper examination, we find an intriguing pattern in Scripture: when an initial gospel presentation is made in terms of the forgiveness of sins, it’s usually to people who already understand the basic concepts of sin and forgiveness. The Jews in Acts 3:19 and the God-fearer Cornelius in Acts 10:43 were familiar with biblical doctrine, so they already understood that sin and forgiveness dealt with personal moral responsibility. But the pagans saw sin primarily as offending the gods, not an issue of personal ethics, and this view of sin also led to a serious misunderstanding of the nature of forgiveness. This is why in the writings of Paul, who ministered largely among pagans, the term “forgive” is rare. While Paul did proclaim repentance and forgiveness of sin (Acts 20:21), he did so in terms that his hearers would understand, such as changing one’s allegiance from idols to Christ (1 Thessalonians 1:9) or turning from an understanding of God as a silver or gold image (Acts 17:29-30). The idea of turning away from something and to Christ is clearly presented, but in terms with which his hearers were familiar.

As our world moves farther from the basic tenets of Christianity, terms such as “sin” and “repentance” are understood less and less. In many ways, our increasingly pluralistic culture resembles the Greek world of Paul’s day, and we would do well to follow Paul’s approach. He became “all things to all people” in his work for the gospel (1 Corinthians 9:22), and this includes the way he presented salvation. Since salvation is a personal encounter with Jesus, Paul’s focus was to bring people to Jesus (Colossians 1:28). If we understand and present the gospel as only about forgiveness of sin, we make it difficult to reach a culture

that does not understand the basic ideas of sin and salvation. More importantly, we water down the real gospel. The good news is the Person of Jesus, both what He has done and who He is. He offers Himself, and we find forgiveness, new life, new meaning, reconciliation to God—all of the benefits of the gospel—only in Him!

To the young person struggling with self-worth, we can offer assurance that Jesus valued them so much that He died for them. To the person chasing wealth, we can offer the true riches in Christ. To the addict, we can offer the freedom that Christ purchased. To the one searching for meaning, we can offer a new life in Jesus. To the mentally and emotionally exhausted, we can offer the rest that Jesus provides. To the hurting, we can offer healing in Christ. The challenge is that we need to genuinely listen to people, to understand their perspective and needs, in order to point them to Jesus in a way that they will understand.

Does this seem too positive, too seeker-sensitive, too much like compromise? It is certainly true that many people and churches today present a gospel with no negatives, no reproach, no changed life, no real consequences for sin. But making sin and the need of repentance the centerpiece of the gospel is also wrong, because it shifts the focus of salvation away from Jesus. The fact is that some of the Bible’s calls to salvation are indeed “repent or perish” (Luke 13:3, 5), but many of them are extremely positive: “come and rest,” “come to Me and drink,” “believe without works.” In many cases, the problem is not an overly positive presentation of the gospel but a lack of biblical discipleship.

THE PLACE OF DISCIPLESHIP

For those of us coming from a thoroughly church culture, it’s easy to forget how little of Christianity the unchurched understand, and therefore how much must be taught via discipleship after

conversion. Paul found it necessary to engage in extensive discipleship of new converts, including explaining some very basic morality: “God wants you to be sexually pure” in 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5 or “You must not tell lies” in Ephesians 4:25. That’s not to necessarily say that the Thessalonians were actively immoral or that the Ephesians were actively lying to one another, but the fact that Paul had to inform or remind them of these things indicates that, at the least, they did not understand the seriousness of these actions. Over and over we find Paul saying, “Since you are now a Christian, here’s how you must live” (for example, Romans 6:1-2, 1 Corinthians 6:15, Colossians 3:1, Ephesians 5:8). Salvation is a matter of changing allegiance; how to

live the Christian life is the subject of discipleship.

Discipleship is far more than just a good idea or an optional process after salvation. It is core to what the church needs to be doing. In Matthew 28:19, Jesus’ final command to the disciples was, “Go make disciples,” not just converts. Much of the New Testament is a record of discipleship: Jesus instructing the disciples, Paul correcting the Corinthians, encouraging the Philippians or teaching the Thessalonians, John reminding his readers of the core realities and practical implications of the gospel. Discipleship is essential!

The gospel is simple: come to Jesus. It always includes repentance, faith, and forgiveness, as well as reconciliation, new life, spiritual

fulfillment, divine enablement and so much more. The life of salvation must be nurtured and directed by ongoing discipleship. If we remove any of these components, what is left is something less than biblical salvation. If we have all of these components without Jesus at the center, what is left is an empty shell, not biblical salvation. But if our focus is on Jesus, if the gospel that we proclaim is Jesus, if the repentance that we preach is Jesus-centered, if we are willing to teach what following Jesus really means, if Jesus alone is our hope and center and source of life—that’s genuine, biblical salvation. ■

CONNECTIONAL MINISTERIAL 2021

This year’s Connectional Ministerial was held at Higher Ground Conference & Retreat Center in West Harrison, IN. Dr. Bill Ury and Dr. John Oswalt were the

speakers. Pastors and their wives from all five Regional Conferences attended and were blessed.



Bible Methodist Youth Camps

S U M M E R 2 0 2 1

Heartland Conference

Youth Camp: July 19-23
Evangelist: Rev. Mark Cravens

Great Lakes Conference

Youth Retreat: June 24-26
Evangelist: Rev. Tim Wiford

Southern Conference

Youth Camp: June 7-11
Evangelist: Rev. Aaron Wardlaw

Mid-Southwest

Youth Camp: June 21-24
Evangelist: Matt Hallam

For more information on these
camps, visit **biblemethodist.org**
or visit the conference
Facebook pages



WORLD MISSIONS

NEWS UPDATE



Timothy Keep
Missions Director



NEW BAPTISMS IN THE PHILIPPINES

In March, twelve young People of the Caduc Philippine Bible Methodist Church—Jabez Conference—accepted the Lord Jesus as their personal

Savior and Lord and surrendered their lives to Him. BMC National President Rev. Brendell Macadang-dang and Ptr. Remegio C. Battad led them in baptism. We are so thankful that in the midst of difficult times God is redeeming souls.



LITTLE MISSIONARY!

A healthy baby boy, Dietrich Mose, was born to Paul and Esther T., April 6, 2021 at 8:21 pm. For you ladies especially, he weighted 8lb, 1oz, and was 20.25 inches long!



PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Good-byes are never easy. This one was especially hard. I was leaving behind so many sweet friends. I couldn't tell them that I'd be back in six months, as I've done before. They watched me clean out my closet, sort through books and papers, and pull the pictures off the walls. This was final and they knew it. They would cry and I would cry.

So, the question is, why is this final? I was struggling to see. Reading was very hard and that was where most

of my ministry was—reading the texts in Mission's class, Shepherd Global Classroom, reading the Bible from the pulpit. And for sure, I shouldn't be driving, but I was! Besides the eye trouble, I was feeling it was time to step aside so someone else could step in. The plan was to wait until December in order to finish the academic year. Because of the big increase in COVID-19 in PNG, the international flights were shutting down. I had to decide whether to stick around and maybe get stuck there or come home early while it was still possible.

The important issue is the precious people, my Friends. Will they be okay and carry on? By God's grace the answer is yes. Culturally the pace is slow—but steady. There is a building project close to completion, a Pidgin Bible School with the largest enrollment ever, Shepherd Global Classroom (English Bible School) has seven eager students, 70 outstation and pastors, lady's ministry and Sunday school groups. There is a lot going on. I feel so badly leaving them. Please pray that the Lord will send labors to this rich harvest field.

I have been home two weeks. An eye specialist examined me. I have cataracts in both eyes and am headed for surgery soon.

So...maybe it will be possible to return to PNG for a visit, at least. PNG will always be the tribe that sleeps in my heart! God Bless them.

~ Shirley Fogleman

RECENT TRIP TO ASIA

When I first applied to the China consulate in Chicago for permission to return to renew my residency in LJ, I did not get a response for months. Suddenly, I received an email offering a visa if I was willing to return within 90 days. I am grateful to our heavenly Father who opens doors and for all that support us!

The trip was anything but routine. It involved multiple covid tests and three weeks of quarantines. However, when I got out of quarantine, I discovered a new appreciation for sipping tea with friends, eating hot pot with students, and chatting shop with colleagues (couldn't get enough of it)!

It was very refreshing to renew several relationships and feel that I was an encouragement to many by just showing up. They said that it had been a long time since a foreigner had been able to get in, and it gave them hope that things were opening up.

A few highlights for me were visiting a new (secluded) learning center location and being able to give a generous scholarship fund to them. Another was renewing my residency permit in record time, so I could return quickly to see my new son! Lastly, I met a local artist in Baisha village who wanted me to come paint with him. He is not a believer, and this new friendship is very exciting to me. It renewed my determination to get my family back into LJ as soon as possible.

~ Paul

Scholarship Funds for Eagles Wings

Note from David and Jill regarding the scholarship funds many of you participated in for Eagles Wings students: *"Thank you very much for your BLESSINGS to the kids, which Paul brought from you. Jill and I wanted to prepare a detailed list of how the blessings have blessed some kids. We want to make sure that they go to the right places where He would like them to go."*



CELEBRATING TWO YEARS WITH EZRA BIBLICAL SEMINARY

What an incredible opportunity it was for Tim to travel to Mexico April 23-May 3 for the celebration of the second full year of Ezra Biblical Seminary. He spent the first weekend with David Martinez visiting two of Ezra's satellite programs. And from there they both traveled on to San Gabriel where a week of teaching and planning with Brennan and Ivon culminated in a great celebration of God's goodness upon this young

discipleship and training ministry.

Numbers of students testified to the spiritual and practical difference this seminary is having in their hearts and ministries. Sarah (pictured above) was one of them. While studying through the Romans course some month ago she realized that she had never truly been born again. She trusted Christ and was baptized a short time later. Sarah continues to take classes and to grow in her faith. To God be the glory! Please continue to pray for the Muir's and for David, for each student, and for God's continued grace upon this vine of His planting.



GREAT LAKES

REGIONAL CONFERENCE NEWS



Blake Jones
Conference President



IRONWOOD BIBLE METHODIST CHURCH – FRANKTON, INDIANA

An April snowstorm rolled across our Indiana fields the first night of revival. However people showed up anyway! And God's Spirit was at work from that first snowy night to the closing Sunday evening service, when a final sermon became unnecessary as souls sought God around the altar. The Adam Buckler family was used of God in both preaching and music ministry and was a huge blessing. Here are a few testimonies

from those who attended:

"I have been saved for about 4 years. And God has been so faithful!! But recently I had felt this restlessness that just wouldn't go away. There was seemingly no peace in my life. Then we went to revival, and at the beginning of the service I clearly heard God say, Becca, you will get that peace tonight. You just have to obey me. And, then, when Bro. Buckler asked if there was any unfinished business, I knew that was me. I went up and gave my all to God!! By the end of that meeting, I had a peace AND a joy that I had never experienced. I have an assurance now, that wherever I go and whatever I do, He will be with me, guiding and directing my life." ~ *Rebecca Himelick*

"The Lord met with me on Friday night of revival and sanctified my soul! He provided me the cleansing I so desperately needed. I will not soon forget the Spirit-filled messages boldly spoken by Bro. Buckler, or the gentle way God moved among us. Thank God for His faithfulness and power even today." ~ *Christy Lindahl*

"It was so refreshing seeing so many seekers in such a short period of time. The touch of the Spirit was so evident and in line with the evangelist's messages. Very refreshing!" ~ *Kevin Robinson*

EASTER SUNRISE SERVICE – EVART, MICHIGAN

God's presence drew feelingly close as the young people and some of the Evert church family gathered to sing and worship on Easter morning. The devotional and story was given by Tim Slavens as the sun spread its glory over the group. The risen Christ painted a glorious sunrise as the group celebrated His resurrection!





ROCK LAKE, MICHIGAN

The Rock Lake Bible Methodist Camp Dining Hall periodically becomes the scene of a busy quilting bee. Sewing machines whirl while patches are cut and pieces are pinned together. Mrs. Carol Brookens has lead this ministry and invited church, community and

conference ladies to participate. In April, they had their 1,000th quilt finished and ready to display.

Many of their quilts have a corner with a stitched Scripture verse that will provide a call to individuals to know the God who will wrap them in His warm embrace.

This quilting ministry has given quilts to missions or missionaries in

Russia, Haiti, Mexico, Philippines, Asia, Czech Republic, Peru, Papua New Guinea, Africa, and Canada. As well recipient programs include baby pantries, a pregnancy center, a community outreach program, an adult foster care home, a homeless center, a home for teens, Christian school staff and students, local church community outreach giveaways, and US based missions school and reservations. Grieving children, newborns, happy newlyweds, a 90th birthday celebrant, precious missionaries and glowing community quilt winners have known the warmth of quilts given in the name of Jesus.

Thank you, Sis. Brookens for your leadership and vision for this ministry of love. And congratulations ladies on 1,000 quilts of all sizes pieced and patched with love for others!



DAWN VALLEY BIBLE METHODIST CHURCH – ONTARIO, CANADA

The Dawn Valley Bible Methodist Church in Southern Ontario moved to outdoor services in the tightening lockdown due to COVID surges in the province. Pastor Krohn is pictured here on a “not so warm” Sunday morning.



GREENVILLE, MICHIGAN

God has enabled the Greenville congregation to install a new steel roof on their church. What a beautiful update!

HEARTLAND

REGIONAL CONFERENCE NEWS



Chris Cravens
Conference President

AROUND THE CONFERENCE

Clockwise from top left: Outreach at York, PA; Baptism with Rev. Mark Heskett, Muncie, IN; President Dan Durkee, PVBI; Rev. Terry Hay at Moberly, MO; Outreach ministry at Fairmont, WV; Fellowship at Coshocton.



BEULAH GROVE CAMP UPDATE

Construction of the new Bath House along with the upgrades to Motel C is nearing completion. A Dedication Service is scheduled for June 21, 2021 at 1:15PM.



MINISTERIAL

Heartland was grateful for the fantastic turnout and wonderful experience of the General Ministerial! It was great to join with the other conferences and enjoy the camaraderie of peers while also being deeply challenged by the Word of God! Special thanks to the Ministerial Sponsors who make these special times free to the Heartland ministers and their spouses! Pictured are some of the Heartland participants.



INTER-CHURCH HOLINESS CONVENTION

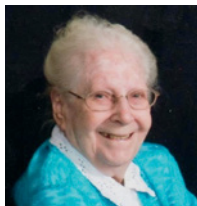
Heartland Elder John Manley preached on Tuesday night of the convention at Gatlinburg, TN. Heartland pastor's wife Valorie Quesenberry introduced the new "Worthy" magazine. It is the official publication of Women of Worth.



HEARTLAND'S LOSS – HEAVEN'S GAIN 2020-2021



Dr. Glen Reiff
May 1, 1935 – Aug. 1, 2020



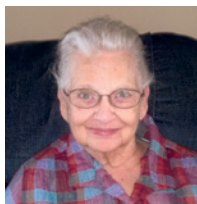
Mrs. Alice Gale
Sep. 15, 1924 – Sep. 13, 2020



Rev. Pieter Marias
Jan. 4, 1947 – Jul. 6, 2020



Dr. Ignacio Palacios
1955 – 2020



Mrs. Barbara Wickard
Dec. 3, 1927 – Jan. 11, 2021

Rev. John Clough, Sr.
Nov. 18, 1931 – Jun. 11, 2020
(Not Pictured)

SOUTHERN

REGIONAL CONFERENCE NEWS



John Parker
Conference President

HISPANIC CHURCH PLANT OPPORTUNITY

Southern Conference President John Parker and Dr. Sidney Grant with FEA Spanish Ministries met in Crossville, AL to dedicate property donated to FEA for a new Hispanic Church Plant in Alabama. This is an exciting answer to prayer for our Conference! We've been asking God to open doors to minister to the rapidly increasing population of Spanish speaking people in Alabama.



HERMIE LATHAM

Hermie Lou Lawley Latham was born October 21, 1925. She graduated high school in 1943 and worked at the Ration Board during WWII and at banking institutions and the USDA until she retired in 1987.

She was a member of Active Bible Methodist Church where she served as Board Member, Sunday School teacher, WMS President, Song Leader and Treasurer for many years. She loved her church and rarely missed a service even when she was not feeling well. She loved to sing and often sang specials at church even up to 95 years of age, using her beautiful alto voice. She loved her Lord and loved people. To know her was to love her. She is survived by her daughter, Regina R. Latham.

A Tribute from the Connectional Chairman

"The entire Bible Methodist

family was saddened to learn of the passing of Sister Hermie. She was one of the oldest charter members of the Bible Methodist Connection of Churches. She was deeply committed to the values of the Church and lived them consistently. Her saintly influence touched her church family at Active; her work career in Bibb County; all the Southern Conference people; and lives in many countries of the world – an influence that will have eternal consequences. I praise God for Hermie Latham and someday will praise God with her!"

~ Michael R. Avery

TORNADO DAMAGE

Tornado damage to Mt. Iva Church in Alabama, March 15th. This is following clean up.



OFFICIAL WELCOME

Conference President was joined by Pastors Crosley and Budenseik in welcoming the Mt. Tabor Bible Church into the Southern Conference. The Church is located near Atlanta, Georgia.



BYRON MASTERS

Brother Byron Masters, successful businessman, skilled craftsman

in a variety of trades, and beloved friend, family and lay leader went home to be with the Lord on March 25th after a battle with liver cancer. He served his local church in almost every capacity and role, as well as his conference and the Bible Methodist Connection of Churches. It was his leadership that preserved the Bible Methodist church in Easley after difficult circumstances threatened it. His support, hard work and encouragement inspired others to start over. Byron served

his country in the military, blessed his community in various ways, and influenced many lives. He traveled at his own expense to numerous mission fields to volunteer his tremendous skills as builder and building engineer to missions projects! He gave his all to God and His Kingdom! He has heard the "well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joys of your Lord!"

TARRANT CHURCH – ENLIGHTENED MINISTRY

The Tarrant City Church is ministering in an urban, inner city environment. They have begun a ministry to help children with homework and studies. This new ministry has caught the eye of the city, and has received a warm welcome in the community! The church family has been very responsive to volunteer to assist children with their studies!



MID-AMERICA

PROVISIONAL CONFERENCE NEWS



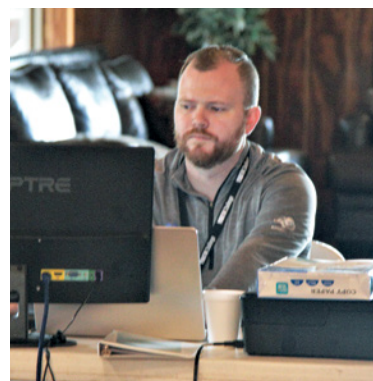
Darrell Stetler II
Conference President

SALINA, KANSAS

The Living Hope Salina Bible Methodist Youth group had worked hard to raise money to attend Youth Challenge West last year and were very disappointed when they were unable to go due to COVID-19. Assistant Pastor Zane Hurst was able to bring a group of 4 young people to YC West this March. Kin Hurst is on the YC West board and he and his wife Jo handle the Video Recording

and Social Media for YC West. Eric Hughes from Oklahoma City Bible Methodist Church is also on the YC West board and is the Activity Director. God's presence was very close during the services and the young people were encouraged and challenged by Rev. Steve Stetler's messages.

Youth Challenge West was supported and attended by people from Mid America Conference and Southwest Conference as well as from other churches and groups.



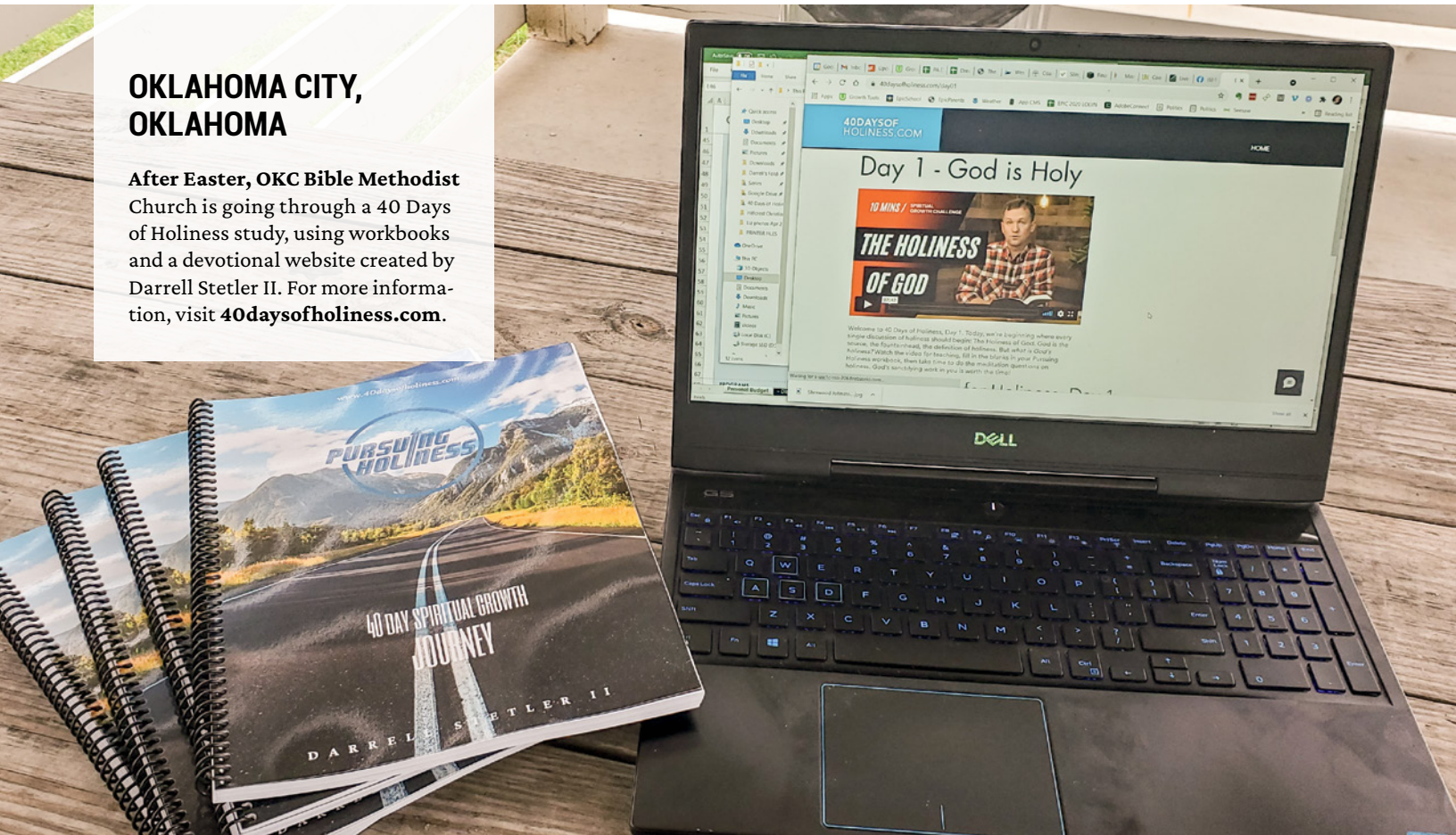
MOBERLY, MISSOURI

Mid-America Conference is excited to announce that Sherwood Johnstone and his family will be moving to Moberly, Missouri to serve as pastor at the Bible Methodist Church. Special thanks to Jason Milhollin and his family for serving as lay leader during an extended time without a pastor.



OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA

After Easter, OKC Bible Methodist Church is going through a 40 Days of Holiness study, using workbooks and a devotional website created by Darrell Stetler II. For more information, visit 40daysofholiness.com.



SOUTHWEST

PROVISIONAL CONFERENCE NEWS



G. Clair Sams
Conference President



SHERMAN, TEXAS

The Sherman congregation celebrated Valentines with a catered dinner with 16 couples and our youth waited the tables. Dr. Rickey Hargrave and wife Julie were our distinguished guest and speaker for the event.

Pastor Snodgrass and the Sherman church hosted a recent IHC Regional Convention, that included beautiful singing, powerful preaching, strong attendance and a great time of interaction with churches. There were people from Oklahoma and Texas attending and worshipping.



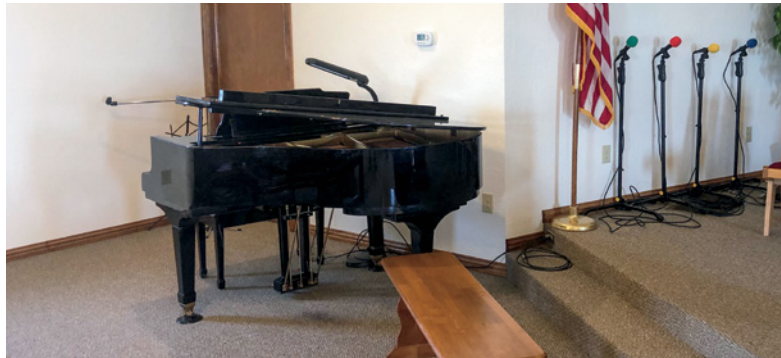
LAKEWOOD (DENVER), COLORADO

Pastor Aaron Johnson and the Congregation at Lakewood – Wesleyan Bible Church – a congregation of the Southwest Bible Methodists hosted the Denver Regional Inter-church Holiness Convention. In preparation of this event the congregation had worked diligently to give their sanctuary a face lift.



DUNCAN, OKLAHOMA

Pastor Caleb Crouch and the congregation at Duncan are thankful for a great gift. Jim and Charol Stafford and the people from Kingwood (Houston, TX) gifted the Duncan church with a beautiful baby grand piano and some very nice *Sing to the Lord* song books.



MAKE PLANS TO ATTEND **Bible Methodist Camp**

Heartland Conference

Annual Conference: June 21-22
Family Camp: June 22-27

Great Lakes Conference

Annual Conference: July 9
Family Camp: July 9-18

Southern Conference

Annual Conference: June 28-29
Family Camp: June 28-July 4

Southwest Conference

Merging Conference: June 19
Family Camp: July 27-August 1

For more information on these camps, visit biblemethodist.org
or visit the conference Facebook pages



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