

THE BIBLE METHODIST

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF

VOLUME 54 | ISSUE 4

A portrait of Blake Jones, a man with white hair and glasses, wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and a red and black patterned tie. He is smiling and looking towards the camera.

**Blake
Jones**

GREAT LAKES
CONFERENCE
PRESIDENT
1999–2022

FROM THE EDITOR



G. Clair Sams
Editor

This is issue of *The Bible Methodist* is a bit historic.

Conference President Blake Jones will be highlighted in this issue. As you will read, he has served the Great Lakes Conference faithfully and graciously. He has also influenced the larger Bible Methodist community as a former editor of this publication and serving on the Connectional Committee and the Connectional Missions Committee. He is presently serving as our Connectional Chairman.

This issue of the paper also closes my tenure as editor. I have enjoyed my years of labor in this area of the Bible Methodist community, watching the organization grow and the footprint develop. Dr. Michael Avery, the newly elected Media Director will now influence both the print media and the digital media for us. He has great insight; dreams of a more active investment in videos and other digital media.

The transition also includes the appointment of Travis Johnson, as the Editor of The Bible Methodist. Travis Johnson presently is the Lead Pastor of the Bible Methodist Church in Findlay, OH. He is an ordained elder in the Heartland Conference of the Bible Methodist Connection of Churches. He also serves as the Spiritual Life Director for Youth Challenge and serves on the board for Holy Joys. He has a BA in Bible and Theology from God's Bible School in Cincinnati, OH and has done graduate work in theology from Wesley Biblical Seminary in Jackson, MS and God's Bible School Graduate Studies. He has been married to his wife, Jody, for 29 years and is the father of two married daughters and one son.

You will have the opportunity to be blessed by the breadth of his studies, pastoral insight and spiritual life as you read and follow his influence on this publication. I recommend that you subscribe, read, and allow the influence of Editor Johnson's work to deepen your walk with the Lord as well as inform you about the ministry of the Bible Methodist community.

Let's openly and joyfully embrace the changes in leadership! God is doing some great things with the younger men he has placed in our area of ministry. Pray for them, encourage them and occasionally compliment them! ■

THE BIBLE METHODIST

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BibleMethodist
CONNECTION OF CHURCHES



A TRIBUTE TO REV. BLAKE AND SAUNDRIA JONES

BY DR. MICHAEL AVERY WITH
CONTRIBUTIONS FROM FAMILY
AND FRIENDS

The Great White North country gave Bible Methodism one of its finest pastors, preachers, and leaders when Blake Edward Jones was born on November 28, 1953, in Sarnia, Ontario, Canada. His parents, Elwyn and Edna Jones, were godly Free Methodist people whose spiritual roots go back to the Welsh revival. Blake's paternal grandparents, Edward and Alice (Davies) Jones, came from Wales to Canada in 1911, fifteen years before the birth of their youngest son, Elwyn. Alice had

been saved in the Welsh Revival but had no one to mentor her. After the family moved to Saskatchewan, Canada, there were revival services held in their community about 1921. With no marked success, the discouraged evangelist was preparing to leave when a dear saint begged him to stay longer. She felt she had prayed through for some kind of move of God. He stayed and Edward and Alice were wonderfully converted. Later, after loosing their farms in the depression and dust bowl era, they moved to the Zion Free Methodist community in southern Ontario in 1938.

Not many years later, WWI Veteran, Ray Unsworth, his wife Blanche, and his two daughters, Myrtle, and Edna, got saved and began to attend this same Zion Free Methodist Church in Beaver Meadow. It was only a matter of time until Edna Unsworth met Elwyn Jones—a meeting that resulted in marriage in 1952. To this union was born Blake, Mark, and Maureen.

After Blake was born, his parents moved to Arizona due to Elwyn's chronic problem with asthma. However, his father was healed while there and when Blake was two, the family moved back to Goderich, Ontario, Canada. Goderich is a beautiful town on the shore of Lake Huron, about two hours north of Sarnia. The Joneses had a nice home with a small dog, a fish aquarium, and a fascinating lava lamp. Across the street from Blake's home lived his grandma and aunt.

Blake went to elementary school and high school in Goderich. He was an amiable and good kid that never seemed to get into trouble. Blake came to know the Lord as his own personal Savior at the Goderich Free Methodist Church when he was four or five years old. His goal in life, even when he was young, was to live a life that was pleasing to God and to help other people. His life was an example to others. Blake was involved with playing the piano and singing in church. He went to retirement homes to sing and encourage the older people. He doesn't remember when he didn't think he would preach. It began as an assumption but grew more evident to him as time passed. As a teenager, he recalls imagining himself preaching and feeling a deep and passionate yearning for people settle over him. He remembers reading the scripture,

“And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding” (Jer. 3:15). It resonated deeply with him. At some point during his high school years, at an altar service at the Dawn Valley Church, he knew God was calling him to be a preacher.

Blake graduated from Goderich High School in 1972, after finishing grade 13. He felt God directing him to Jordan College in Cedar Springs, Michigan. His 13th year in High School included Latin, Calculus, Geometry, Trigonometry and History. Most of his grade 13 credits were transferable to college level work so he was able to jump start his college experience and enter Jordan College as a sophomore. He was so good in Math that he taught Algebra classes while he was a student at Jordan. During his time at Jordan, Blake excelled in academics, sang in the choir, sang in a quartet, and served as president of the student body. He also did something else at Jordan College—he met his future wife!

Now with Saundy emerging into the story we must go back in time to the fifties and to Stanwood, Michigan. It was here on January 22, 1955, that Saundria (Saundy) Lee Coxon was born to L.D. and Margaret Lovina (Smith) Coxon. Saundy's maternal great grandparents, the Smiths, came from New York to Goshen, Indiana. After living in Indiana for some time they heard about a farm for sale near Big Rapids, Michigan. They bought it sight unseen and loaded livestock,

household goods and family on the train and moved to Michigan. What they found was not a farm. There were no buildings—no house or barn—and nothing even cleared. It was a forest. The family had no place to go. The local Free Methodist Church stepped in and helped them find a place to get settled. This same church family shared the gospel with them and the Smith family was converted.

Saundy's paternal grandparents lived in northern Michigan, very close to the Garfield Free Methodist Church. After the death of their baby Myra, Albert and Winnie Coxon surrendered their lives to Jesus Christ. LD Coxon was born to this couple while living here and later the family moved to Spring Arbor, Michigan to put their children in the Free Methodist College there.

LD Coxon and Margaret Smith got married during WW II in a simple house wedding in Grand Rapids, Michigan. A few years later, L.D. felt God calling him to preach so he began to prepare for the ministry with home study courses and shortly thereafter he began to pastor Free Methodist Churches. In January of 1966, while pastoring in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, he and other pastors left the Free Methodist Church and formed the United Holiness Church. Later he pastored in West Virginia and then in Pontiac, Michigan. While living in Pontiac, Saundy decided to attend the denomination's school and in 1972, moved to Jordan College to finish her senior year at Cedar Springs High

School and start classes at Jordan College. She graduated from Cedar Springs High School in 1973 and became a full-time student at Jordan College that fall.

It is at Jordan College where our two stories start the process of becoming one. Blake met Saundy in the fall of 1972. She was the youngest and prettiest girl on campus. Blake was a cool sophomore and the only boy with "cut down" bell bottoms! (Blake's mother didn't think his pant legs should be so wide, so she cut them down!) They got to know each other playing ping-pong in the dining hall and traveling in "field service" together. Saundy was in the Ladies Trio and Blake played the piano for them. Later they both sang in a quartet. They remember performing at IHC in choir robes! The first time Blake and Saundy spent time together, they did so in a small group. Blake had asked a couple of girls to accompany him on this outing. Saundy was a little perturbed because she was hoping for it to be just the two of them. But she decided not to say anything and just be as sweet as she could be. It worked! The next time he only asked her, and they officially had their first date. All they could afford to do was to walk down to the pizza place or the local Tasty Freeze for dates. A couple of times they got tickets for a Hymn Sing. Obviously those short walks and inexpensive dates worked for soon the two lovebirds were engaged.

Blake and Saundy both graduated from Jordan College in 1975. Blake with a Bachelor of Arts, Majoring in Music and Bible, and Saundy with an Associates of Arts. After graduation Blake went home to Petrolia, Ontario to work at the hospital for the summer and Saundy went home to prepare for her wedding. They were married on October 4, 1975, at Jordan College Chapel in Cedar Springs, Michigan. They honeymooned in the Upper Peninsula in a town called Paradise, paying around \$9 a night for their motel.

MINISTRY YEARS

Blake and Saundy came home from their honeymoon and moved right into their first pastorate in Lapeer, Michigan where they were

THE CHURCH WAS SMALL BUT THE JONESES LOVE FOR THE PEOPLE WAS LARGE,
AND THE PEOPLE LOVED THEM BACK.

paid \$40 a week. Blake's first Sunday to preach in his own church was October 19, 1975. Blake remembers those early sermon preparation times as the equivalent of preparing two term papers a week. The church was small but their love for the people was large, and the people loved them back. Many of those people have stayed a part of their family's life. The two-story parsonage seemed empty, so they filled it up with Sunday school kids and teenagers. The events weren't very fancy but again they were filled with love. They made lots of popcorn and shared memorable moments with those kids.

Their first child was born in 1976. Benny was born 10 weeks premature. After an extensive hospital stay, he was allowed to come home weighing only 5 lbs. He was never well for long and experienced frequent respiratory infections. In December of 1977, during a terrible snowstorm, Benny spiked a high fever. Blake and Saundy did everything they knew to do for him. Blake stepped out of the room to get something for little Benny when he heard Saundy cry out, "Benny!" He had simply fallen over in Saundy's lap and quit breathing. They were only a mile from the hospital, but the terrible snowstorm slowed everything down. They slipped and slid their way to the hospital in their tiny Fiat with their little boy wrapped in a huge quilt. At the entrance to the hospital, Saundy raced inside calling for someone to help her in the almost empty halls. It was not to be, Benny slipped to heaven that snowy afternoon. Tragedy had struck hard and fast for the young preacher and his young wife. As the news spread, their home began to fill with friends and church family who simply came to sit with them and feed them and give them the gift of presence. The loss of their first little boy gave Blake and Saundy an amazing ability to sympathize with those who have faced similar losses and taught them the value of just sitting quietly with those who grieve. They learned from their own loss the valuable gift of "presence" and they have given it to countless numbers of people over the years. Life moved on, and God blessed Blake and Saundy with another child, Heidi Rochelle, born in 1978. In 1981 God added a little boy, Daron Blake.

In August of 1983 the family of four moved to the Garfield County Church located in

the deep woods of northern Michigan. Their days at Garfield were filled with the rich sounds and smells of potlucks, wood-bees and woodsmoke. There were four wood burning stoves to keep going between the church and parsonage! Sunday mornings here were extra busy times. During cold weather a Sunday morning began with carrying in wood and stoking the fires. Then picking up the Sunday school children, teaching the Sunday school classes, leading singing and playing piano. Blake would preach while Saundy tried to keep a row of Sunday school kids in line. After service, the kids would often come over for dinner before Blake took them home. It was during this time in Garfield, that Cherie (1985) and the twins, Derek and Kendrick (1988), joined the family.

In August of 1989, the Jones family exchanged the northern rolling hills of maples and pines in Michigan for the open farmland of southern Ontario where they pastored the Dawn Valley Wesleyan Bible Church. It was at Dawn Valley that the boys fell in love with farming and Blake and Saundy fell in love with gardening. The Joneses had big gardens at Dawn Valley but they also had friends with bigger hearts. Various members of the church often gifted them with a side of beef or pork. The Joneses repaid that kindness by spreading a huge table on Sunday that was rarely without someone from the church being asked to join.

As Blake continued to grow as a leader and gain influence, his leadership

qualities were recognized by all those around him. He served as District Superintendent from 1978–1991. He also served as the Youth Camp President and General Missions Superintendent for the United Holiness Church. In 1986 he was elected Conference Vice President. While still a young man with a growing family, Blake brought a valuable perspective to conference leadership. During the following thirteen years in which he served in conference leadership, the Lord enabled the conference to experience unity and growth under Rev. Lowell Derscheid and Dr. James Keaton, Sr.

In 1994, the United Holiness Church joined the Bible Methodist Connection of Churches and became the Great Lakes Conference of the Bible Methodist Connection of Churches. This move gave the churches a new focus. Fresh enthusiasm abounded. Significant improvements to the campground were made including a new tabernacle, a dining hall, and a new dormitory.

In July of 1999, Blake was elected the Conference President for the Great Lakes Conference. The family moved back to Rock Lake, Michigan where Blake also became the assistant pastor of Rock Lake Bible Methodist Church. A year later Blake became senior pastor at the church and served the dual role of pastor and Conference President.

The decision to move near the campground and Rock Lake Church in Vestaburg, Michigan was both literal and symbolic, as Blake and Saundy Jones brought

“family” to the conference. As their five wonderful children grew and helped in many meaningful ways around the campground and in the various ministries of the local church and conference, a sincere focus by Blake and Saundy to mentor and encourage the strengthening of conference families could be observed. This family emphasis had an indelible impact upon the conference and was translated to local congregations through President Jones persistently promoting the virtues of a healthy “church family” made up of people and families who loved God and cared for each other while sharing and doing life together. Conference events were celebrated as times when families worked, played, prayed, and sought God together. Family camp meeting schedules were adjusted to accommodate families with younger children and teens. This, in turn, led to a healthy, nurturing and relaxed environment where spiritual needs were met, friendships thrived, and the next generation found purpose.

Always the gracious gentleman with an appreciation for preparation and details, Blake led the conference with the poise of a statesman, yet in a manner that was always approachable. His Spirit-led, authentic leadership at Annual Conferences fostered an era where church politics or pet agendas had no place, and conference business was done with tactful order and collaboration, fully trusting that God was at work in the affairs of the conference. To pastors, pastor’s wives and conference families, Blake and Saundy have been consoling confidants in times of trouble and applauding supporters in times of success. They have shed tears of sorrow and joy with their people. They have shared life with the Great Lakes church families in so many meaningful ways.

Blake was and is a “Prince of a Preacher.” His messages that were shared in the local churches during conference visits or revivals provided encouragement and hope. His annual conference messages each year at Family Camp were masterpieces of Spirit-anointed truth that gave clarity and direction. His sermons were biblically based and God-ordained. His preaching has shaped a generation’s view of a loving Heavenly Father that is always interested in their good.

ALWAYS THE GRACIOUS GENTLEMAN WITH AN APPRECIATION FOR PREPARATION AND DETAILS, BLAKE LED THE CONFERENCE WITH THE POISE OF A STATESMAN, YET IN A MANNER THAT WAS ALWAYS APPROACHABLE.

A WORD FROM THEIR CHILDREN

Our growing up years were marked by grace-giving leadership. The kind of leadership that valued relationship over rules.

Our parents' lives were defined by consistent devotion to a loving Heavenly Father. Dad modeled a discipline to the means of grace that is both livable and winsome. During times when I was trying to figure something out or fearful that I might mess up, Dad would say, "It's the direction of your heart that matters." Dad lived with the direction of his heart toward God and led our family into a relationship with a God whose heart is toward us.

Mom and Dad never complained about their work. One of our favorite family stories is of one of my brothers who was anxious to grow up so he could stay up late in the study like Daddy. Being involved in ministry was something to be desired. Through the ups and downs, both Dad and Mom never took sides in front of us. We sensed when there was tension and knew when things were difficult, but it was never discussed in such a way that caused us to carry bitterness toward people.

They offered the gift of presence and a listening ear to everyone. This gift sometimes came with the sacrifice of family time. However, my parent's response to those sacrifices shaped how we dealt with the disappointments.

I don't think I have ever met a person more gifted in connection. Dad doesn't just tolerate people, he values them. He seeks understanding and protects relationships. He holds with gentleness the opinions of others with whom he does not agree. What he knows about someone does not affect his ability to interact positively with them. He doesn't pull away from awkward or difficult situations. We have seen how Dad is sought out because of these strengths, and we understand because these strengths have held our family together through pain, loss, and life in general.

Dad and Mom made work fun when we were growing up. We were normal kids and didn't just jump at the chance to work, but when work was on the agenda, Dad was whistling, and Mom was telling stories or helping us sort out life while we topped strawberries. Work was followed

with lingering at the supper table enjoying each other's company or on the porch with ice-cream. The trickle down of this family culture is evident when I visit my siblings. We want to pass on what so deeply shaped our lives.

Dad has always treated Mom with respect and tenderness. They are a team. Mom has always supported Dad one hundred percent. She might fuss at him when he does yard work in his dress clothes, but she builds him up and celebrates him. Their solid marriage has been the backbone of our sense of safety and belonging.

There are many beautiful things I could say about my mother and father, but possibly the most important is this: they allowed us to have a front row seat watching their journey with Jesus and we all found it wonderfully attractive!

THANKS, FROM THE BIBLE METHODIST FAMILY!

The entire Bible Methodist family offers its deepest appreciation and love for the twenty-three years of leadership Blake and Saundy gave to the Great Lakes Conference and to all the Bible Methodist Connection of Churches. ■

JANUARY PRAYER FOCUS

21 DAYS OF PRAYER

JANUARY 9–29, 2023

PRAY AROUND THE WORLD

JANUARY 29 – 6 PM (EST), US & MEXICO

JANUARY 30 – 7 AM, THE PHILIPPINES



Check Facebook each day
for a prayer-focused devotional
[FACEBOOK.COM/BMETHODISTORG](https://www.facebook.com/bmethodistorg)

WORLD MISSIONS

NEWS UPDATE



R.G. Hutchison
Missions Director

AFRICA85 INITIATIVE IN ZAMBIA AND CAMEROON [1-3]

God is continuing to open doors for teaching and training throughout the continent of Africa through the Africa85 Initiative, which is a partnership between Bible Methodist Missions and Hope International Missions, working in conjunction with Shepherds Global Classroom and others who have training resources and connections to local leaders who want to be equipped to start training centers.

One such opportunity has emerged in Zambia. Maricka Herrer wrote:

“Our 10-day trip to Zambia began with a pastor’s seminar in the capital city of Lusaka. We had a wonderfully enriching time with Drs. Tom McCall and Richard Hutchison, as well as Tim Keep, who came to join us for the training. Our host church there, Shelter of Life Embassy, hopes to start a training program for local Christian workers, particularly in the fast-growing outskirts of the city, where such training is hard to come by for local ministers.

As those from the US returned, Glenn and Stephanie Gault and I traveled 9 hours west to Mayukwayukwa, one of the biggest and oldest refugee camps in Africa—and also home to our host, pastor Allegri and his family, who themselves are refugees.

It is the “final stop” for around 10,000 permanent residents, most of whom fled their home countries due to conflict, and

have no hope to ever return. No income. No opportunity to work. And less than 1% chance of being resettled. They live there, have families there, their children’s lives most likely not being any different than their own. Originally, we went to spend time with their church and invest in their local leaders, but it grew into much more. They had invited some of the other churches to join our sessions, hoping that a few would attend. In the end, we had 16 different denominations represented at the seminar. Afterward, they informed us that they had decided to start a training program together that would equip their people to minister in the camp, and, should they get resettled, to be witnesses where they live.”

In Cameroon, the seeds from a previous team visit are now bearing fruit as a new training center has been launched. Maricka Herrer reported:

“In the first week of October, the SGC [Shepherds Global Classroom] Seminary in Douala, Cameroon officially began its first semester. Pastor Timothy of Dignity Chapel International, whose church we visited last year, is leading an interdenominational team of teachers, with around a dozen students in their first take-in. There are already requests for training centers to be opened in two more locations. Please pray for pastor Timothy and his team as they train their local church leaders, and for the Holy Spirit’s work in the lives of the students through what they are learning.”

MEXICO RESTART [4-7]

The Mexico Bible Methodist Church has initiated a complete restart that will accompany the implementation of a newly updated and contextualized version of the Bible Methodist Discipline. Our missionaries, Brennan Muir and David Martinez have worked very closely with the Mexico BM President, Pastor Cuco Sanchez to prepare for this important occasion. A delegation from the BMM Missions Committee and the Connectional Committee accompanied Dr. Hutchison for this pivotal decision. Now, much work remains to be done as they are preparing to travel to each local church in the coming months to further explain and train local pastors and lay leaders in how to implement the new Discipline including its leadership and accountability guidelines. We want to thank those of you who prayed and interceded for us during these days. They were difficult, and yet God favored us with a prevailing sense of unity, peace, and confidence in Him. National leaders and pastors took courageous steps to move forward with integrity and purpose. By the end of our final meeting with the national board today, one of the leaders wanted to know when they could begin planning and preparing to plant more churches and see the work move forward. There will certainly be many more challenges to face, but we sense that God is beginning to do a new thing. Please keep praying with us toward this end.



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1: Training session in Zambia **2:** Refugee camp in Zambia
3: Training center in Cameroon **4:** Disciplines for the Mexico Bible Methodist Church **5:** US Mexico delegation (L-R) Tim Keep, David Martinez, Michael Avery, Brennan Muir, Doug Eads, R.G. Hutchison **6:** National board meeting in Mexico **7:** Newly appointed National Board of the Mexico Bible Methodist Church. (L-R) Alejandro Rangel (treasurer), Pastor Jose Cruz Fernandez (member at large), Missionary David Martinez (secretary), Pastor J. Refugio Sanchez Hernandez (President and Legal Representative), Pastor Manuel Navarro Quezada (Vice President), Brennan Muir (Missionary Representative). Also pictured, BMM Director R.G. Hutchison.



7

GREAT LAKES

REGIONAL CONFERENCE NEWS



David Ward
Conference President

MEN'S RETREAT



1: Pastors Steve Bills and Nathaniel Tucker led our first annual Men's Retreat 2: Rev. James Bender was the featured speaker 3: Jay Janofski served as Range Master 4: Rev. Michael Schaub and his son, Jonathan on the Archery Range 5: The Target Range was a popular activity



FAMILY RETREAT



6: Family Retreat is a highlight of each Conference year
7: Rev. Matt and Dorcas Hallam led sessions sharing Best Family Practices
8: Eli and Thelma Albring put together many fun activities
9: Family Retreat is enjoyed by all!

ORDINATION SERVICE



10: Immediately after Family Retreat was the Ordination of Rev. Matt Hallam
11: Connectional Chairman, Rev. Blake Jones prays over the Hallams

HEARTLAND

REGIONAL CONFERENCE NEWS



Chris Cravens
Conference President

MEN OF INTEGRITY [1-2]

Once again Men of Integrity was a great success. Around 150 men gathered at Beulah Grove for encouragement, instruction and fellowship!

NEW CHURCH DEDICATION [3]

It was an amazing day of celebration for New Life Community Church (Kenwood) when they dedicated their beautiful new facility on September 18. President Cravens and members of the Executive Committee were there to recognize Pastor Mark Cravens and the congregation's achievement. The pulpit was built and dedicated in honor of Rev. Bennie Durr, Sr. The Conference President then preached the message and led the congregation in dedicating the church for the glory of God.

UNION BIBLE COLLEGE WORLDCHANGERS WEEK [4]

Rev. Jack Hooker and Rev. David Ward represented Bible Methodism and the Heartland and Great Lakes Conferences during this annual event at UBC.

BEULAH GROVE [5]

J.D. Young Chapel & Facility being built at Beulah Grove this spring! It will be a 40' X 104' building that will provide space for a chapel, along with a maintenance and storage facility.

PASTORAL INSTALLATIONS [6-7]

President Cravens officiated the installation of Rev. Sean and Becky English at Danville, Ohio and Rev. Patrick and Laurie Dewhurst at West Mecca, Ohio.

50 YEARS OF MINISTRY [8]

Conference President Chris Cravens represents the Heartland Conference recognizing Pastor Terrie Hay on 50 years of faithful ministry.

AROUND THE CONFERENCE [9-12]

President Cravens visited our churches in Peoria, IL, Westfield, IN, Ft. Wayne, IN and McDonald, PA.





SOUTHERN

REGIONAL CONFERENCE NEWS



John Parker
Conference President

NEW CONFERENCE PRESIDENT ELECTED [1]

A special called session of Conference was convened on August 27 on the Pell City Campground to elect our next Conference President who will follow Rev. John Parker on July 9, 2023. Rev. Doug Eads was the overwhelming choice with approximately 90% of the vote on the first ballot. Pastor Doug Eads currently serves as Vice President of the Conference, President of the Camp Meeting, and Pastor of Ada Chapel Bible Methodist Church. He has served in a variety of other leadership positions and is a proven, trusted, and faithful servant leader. No one works harder for the conference and camp. His Pastor's heart and compassionate spirit have been an encouragement to many and will be a great asset to his leadership as Conference President. He has very diligently studied and sought to better himself as a pastor and leader in the earning of two master's degrees (2nd completed this year). Perhaps his greatest asset is his lovely wife Judy who is herself a leader in the Conference. She has very

capably served for as President of our Women's Missionary Society. They have led multiple teams on Missions trips to do work and ministry projects. They have earned our trust and confidence. This will be an intense learning year of preparation and adjustment for them. Please lift them up in prayer for God's enabling grace in the coming months!

FUTURE PASTORS & SCHOOL OF THE PROPHETS [2]

We hosted the first combined Future Pastors (formerly Inter-collegiate Ministerial Fellowship) and School of the Prophets on out campground. Attendance surpassed all expectations. It was a very profitable and blessed event!

LADIES RETREAT

This year's ladies retreat was held on September 8-10. The theme was "Fill Your Cup" and Mrs. Jody Johnson was the featured speaker.

HISPANIC CHURCH PLANT [3]

Our Hazel Green, AL Bible Methodist Church has transitioned to become a new Hispanic Church Plant under the leadership of F.E.A. Spanish Ministries and the leadership of Rev. Sidney Grant. Mr. Don Davis, Trustee was delighted to turn over the keys to Pastor Elias Francisco who is now working hard to build a strong Spanish church in the Huntsville, AL area. We hope to partner with F.E.A. Spanish Ministries in planting other Hispanic churches in our Conference. Spanish services began in the Hazel Green church in September. Work teams from the Conference have joined in making improvements to the property. We are very excited about this new ministry!

YOUNG PASTORS INSTALLED [4-5]

Pastor Logan Sankey was installed at Stanton Bible Methodist Church on July 31st. Pastor Dwight & Lorna Crosley were installed at Brent Bible Methodist on Sept. 25th.



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CONFERENCE LOSSES

REV. JOHN ROSSMAN [6] *Conference Elder*

June 21, 2022

Rev. Rossman and his wife Mae have served as Missionaries, and Pastors throughout their lives. Bro. Rossman is survived by his wife and daughters, Denise, Diana, Veronica, and Amy. Pastor Dwight Crosley's wife Lorna is the granddaughter of Rev. John and May Rossman.

JANICE (HODGE) HELMS [7] *Glencoe Bible Methodist*

August 9, 2022

Sis. Janice Helms is so very dearly loved and well known across the Bible Methodist Connection. She and her husband Tim Helms have served at every level of the Conference and Connection. She is survived by her son Harold and a loving family and church family!



MARY NELL VESS [8] *Liberty, South Carolina*

August 24, 2022

Sis. Vess's husband Rev. J. Willet Vess served in leadership in our Conference as well as the Connection. Mary Nell leaves many lives touched by her care and influence in our Churches as well as the many other places they have served. She is survived by her girls, Libby, Ronda, Joy son John & their families!

REV. RINNIE EVANS [9] *Enterprise, Alabama*

September 8, 2022

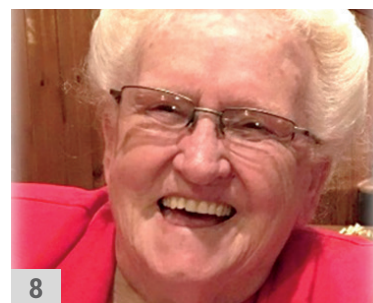
Pastor Rinnie and wife Grace Evans have faithfully served as Shepherds to the Enterprise Church 30 plus years. They were saved through the influence of the church in 1980. The Evans have 4 daughters, Christen, Tracy, Sarah, & Carrie (deceased) and have been married 50 yrs.



JIMMY LARPENTER [10] *Ponchatoula, Louisiana*

October 22, 2022

Bro. Jimmy Larpenter was beloved both in his home Church, The Bible Holiness Church of Ponchatoula, LA and in our Conference. The Larpenters have attended our Camp and identified with our Conference for many years. He is survived by his wife Juliette, family and Friends!



SOUTHWEST

PROVISIONAL CONFERENCE NEWS



G. Clair Sams
Conference President

OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA [1-5]

The Oklahoma City Church replaced their old mobile home that housed the Bread of Life Pantry Ministry. This ministry serves over 20,000 people per year. The storage buildings will double the floor space and capacity of the ministry.

Trunk and Treat at Oklahoma City, OK was an opportunity to invest in the community. Each group focused on a theme and prepared the display to highlight the theme. The food included cotton candy, popcorn, hot dogs and chili.

DERIDDER, LOUISIANA [6-8]

We had another great baptismal service just in time before the weather got too cold! We're so blessed at how God is helping our new people! Pictured are Dorothy Causey, Tim O'Keefe, and Tony Raines.

Our church hosted a baby shower and potluck for James and Macie Betts. We welcome sweet little Aspyr Drew into our church family! Congratulations James, Macie, and big brother Logan!

A baby shower was held for Anna and Ty Drake. Welcome little Atlan Allen to our church family! Congratulations Ty, Anna, big brother Daegan, and big sister Kaelyn!

DURANT, OKLAHOMA [9]

It was a great privilege to celebrate 7 years of sobriety for Dino and Velma Bridges. Drugs and alcohol had been part of their broken lives, but Christ's forgiveness and love from the Church has supported their transformation.

SERVANT'S HEART CHAPEL, CLOVIS, NEW MEXICO [10]

Servant's Heart Chapel was happy to receive two new members—Paul Sutherland and Robert Wigmore. It is a joy to connect with Believers who are committed to growing in Christ.





CHRISTMAS CARDS FOR MISSIONARIES

Each year we encourage everyone to send a Christmas card and a small love gift to each of the Mission Department personnel. This annual project has proven to be a great help to them for many years. Let them know that we support and appreciate them!

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