



THE BAPTIST MESSENGER

Informing and Inspiring Oklahoma Baptists Since 1912
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OKLAHOMA BAPTISTS WOMEN'S RETREAT

ENCOURAGES WOMEN TO
'BE JOYFUL,' APRIL 21-22



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Oklahoma Baptists Women's Retreat to encourage women to 'Be Joyful,' April 21-22

>> by Staff

DAVIS—"Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer" (Rom. 12:12).

This little verse packs some powerful instructions from the Apostle Paul, and the 2023 Oklahoma Baptists Women's Retreat will focus on each phrase during the event's three general sessions.

The Women's Retreat will be at Falls Creek Baptist Conference Center, April 21-22, and will offer another great opportunity for Oklahoma Baptist women to gather, fellowship and experience all this annual event offers.

"This weekend away at Falls Creek has become a staple calendar event for women across Oklahoma as they escape the demands of everyday life to focus on worshipping the Lord and connecting with one another," said Amy Cordova, Oklahoma Baptists missions and women's ministry partner and program director of the retreat.

Five speakers headline the event, including Jamy Fisher, wife of Todd Fish-



er, executive director-treasurer of Oklahoma Baptists. Fisher is active in writing and teaching Bible studies and serving in women's and college ministry.

Elizabeth Woodson is a Bible teacher and writer for Lifeway. She is a contributing author for "World on Fire" and the author of "Embrace Your Life: How to Find Joy When The Life You Have is Not The Life You Hoped For." Mary Wiley is another Lifeway author who wrote "Everyday Theology," an eight-week Bible study exploring essential doctrines and why they matter in everyday lives.

Sandy Wisdom-Martin serves as executive director-treasurer for national WMU in Birmingham, Ala. She has been involved in women's ministry for 26 years. Lauren Green McAfee works at the Hobby Lobby corporate office and is an author and founder of Stand for Life, which seeks to promote human dignity of life in the womb and women facing unplanned pregnancies.

Worship leaders through music for the Women's Retreat include Eden Trentham of Jenks, First and Minister James Willis and Nu Praze Choir from Oklahoma City, Prospect.

Falls Creek will have many of its regular features available for the retreat including the zipline, a 5K run, as well as the Centennial Prayer Garden and walk-up activities in the amphitheater.

"One of the greatest benefits of attending the Women's Retreat is developing a deeper relationship with other like-minded women who are pursuing Christ," Cordova said. "The time in the car, cabins and walking the grounds of Falls Creek is incredibly valuable as women engage in conversations that are encouraging one another to know and follow Christ."



The Women's Retreat will once again be a hybrid event, allowing churches to host gatherings across the state while also meeting at Falls Creek.

"I realize the great effort it takes to leave home for just one night during a busy spring schedule," Cordova said. "Rearranging the calendar and preparing to be away is a worthy effort to focus our minds on Christ. My prayer is women come back refreshed and inspired to live for Jesus in their homes, workplaces and communities."

An offering also will be taken at the Women's Retreat that will support the work of International Mission Board missionaries who are serving people of Ukraine and Russia.

Registration deadline is Saturday, April 1, to attend the Women's Retreat in person at Falls Creek. For more information on registration as well as schedule and other retreat features, visit oklahomabaptists.org/women/retreat. 

Rite of passage: The crowd



Walker Moore

Author & *Messenger* Columnist

Email | walker@back40.org

[@WalkerDeanMoore](https://twitter.com/WalkerDeanMoore)

It was an amazing sight. People waiting in line for hours. Strangers talking to strangers, sharing their stories. Everyone was waiting for one man.

They had set up a stage for this man, and groupies had packed in tightly, hoping they could touch him. As he walked out on the catwalk, a guitar slung around his neck, they stretched out their arms, desperately trying to touch him. Young, old, it made no difference. For the next three hours straight, he had everyone in the palm of his hands. They had all come to see one man: Bruce Springsteen.

One young lady caught my attention. She was the closest to the famous singer, fitting into the right angle where the catwalk and stage joined. She danced her heart out, singing every song and knowing the motions that went with them. (I never knew you had to make certain motions to certain songs at a Bruce Springsteen concert.)

For three hours, she contorted her body in every shape you could think of. This girl had more joints in her body than humanly possible. She didn't care what anyone thought, she was caught up into the moment and was one with the "Boss," which his die-hard follow-



ers call him. But she wasn't the only one with moves, you ought to see the elderly lady beside me.

In the end, everyone walked away talking about how Springsteen had blessed them. What I took away is the intensity these people manifested.

I can count on one hand the number of concerts I have attended. My first was the Mamas and the Papas in the '60s. The other night, 55 years later, I went to my third concert. Each one was filled with people who had intensity.

In Mark 5, we read the story of Jesus coming to the village of Magdala. A large crowd gathered to see what they could make of this man whom they had heard so much about. In the crowd that day was a woman who had been hemorrhaging for 12 years. She believed if she only could touch the hem of Jesus' garment, she would be healed.

I wonder what level of intensity she possessed to reach out to Jesus. One of my favorite pictures is painted on the wall of the Magdala Visitor's Center. It portrays the feet of a crowd, and near the ankles, a woman's hand is stretching out to touch the hem of Jesus' garment. She touched, and she was healed.

Have we lost that intensity, that desire to reach out to Jesus? Maybe that is what is wrong with our country. Those who hold the name of Jesus have lost their passion, their intensity to find Jesus in their daily lives. If we seek, He will heal.

"If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land" (2 Chron. 7:14). [m](#)

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First person: The answer is not death



Tristan Martin
Pastor of Norman, Alameda
Member of Oklahoma Baptists
Ethics and Religious Liberties
Committee

"I'm just tired of suffering." These are the words of a person known as "Lois" in Canada who underwent gender reassignment surgery in 2009. The aftermath of the surgery has been nothing short of horrific for Lois who has had great difficulty in receiving medical care as a person who has "transitioned."

Not only has Lois faced physical turmoil, post-surgery, but mental distress has added great suffering. Lois is one of a growing community of those who were told gender reassignment surgery would solve problems, when in reality, it only created many more.

Sadly, the story gets worse. In Canada, those experiencing suffering, can apply for MAiD (Medical Assistance in Dying), what we call euthanasia. Officially, this is reserved for those with terminal diagnoses, but the government is willing to interview those who do not fit that criteria. Lois hopes to receive government authorization to take the death pill and end the years of pain.

Francis Schaeffer said, "The devil never gives us the luxury of fighting only on one front." The story of Lois

highlights transgender issues, mental illness and euthanasia. Each of these issues are complicated and complex. They all relate back to the same Christian doctrine, the Imago Dei.

Every person is made in the Image of God. Everyone has inherent dignity that cannot be taken away. This is why Francis Schaeffer said there are no little people. No other creature is made in God's image. This doctrine is our basis for being a people who are pro-life. The baby in the womb deserves life because he or she is made in the image of God.

Our recognition of dignity does not end at birth. We are pro-life "from womb to tomb." That includes supporting adoption and foster care, so that once a baby is born, he or she can grow up in a family the way that God designed.

But it also includes that transgender person who realizes that transition was a mistake, like Laura Perry, whose story has been told in the *Baptist Messenger* of going from being "Transgender to Transformed." It includes that person who is contemplating euthanasia. It includes the person whose anxiety makes it hard to breathe at



times. Being truly pro-life means recognizing the God-given dignity of every person, but it doesn't end there.

To anyone wanting to end suffering, the answer is not death. The answer is not surgery, and it is not government-sanctioned suicide. The answer is found in a God who came in flesh to save men and women out of their sin and suffering. The answer is, has always been, and will always be Jesus Christ.

He said, "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28). The suffering and tired need the rest that only Jesus can provide. But they also need the community that only a family, the church, can provide.

Our polarized society would lead us to see people as "other," worthy of passing by. Jesus calls us to step into the mess of hurt and pain and offer life, just as He did for us. [m](#)

OBU in New Orleans!



Sponsored by



OBU Reception

7 p.m.

Tuesday, June 13, 2023

The National WWII Museum

945 Magazine St., New Orleans, LA 70130

This event is open to all Oklahoma messengers attending the SBC annual meeting, all OBU Alumni and all friends of the university.

Registration required—
okbu.edu/alumni or QR code.



Follow the Herd on Social Media. [f](#) [@](#)

Nominees sought for induction into Oklahoma Baptist Hall of Fame; recipients of Distinguished Service Award

>> by Bob Nigh

**OKLAHOMA BAPTISTS
HISTORICAL SECRETARY**

The Oklahoma Baptist Historical Commission is seeking nominations of persons to be considered for induction into the Oklahoma Baptist Hall of Fame (HOF) and recipients of the annual Distinguished Service Award (DSA). Nominations must be received by April 30.

Oklahoma Baptist Hall of Fame

All recommendations will be given careful consideration by the HOF committee of the Historical Commission. Using the following guidelines, nominees:

- Must have been deceased seven or more years;
- Must have had a good reputation both within and without the Body of Christ;
- Must have by calling, dedication, and sacrifice given their life in service to the Lord;

d. Must have made significant contributions to the denominational work of Oklahoma Baptists; and

e. Must have been known to cooperate with fellow believers in promoting the saving message of Jesus Christ.

A short biographical sketch should accompany each recommendation, citing support for the nomination. A photograph of the person being recommended should also be included.

Recommendations should be sent to the Oklahoma Baptists' Historical Commission, 3800 N. May Ave., Oklahoma City, OK 73112.

Each nomination must be signed by the person submitting the recommendation and include their full mailing address, telephone number, and email address, if available. Following the annual meeting, an article about the person will be printed in *The Oklahoma Baptist Chronicle*.

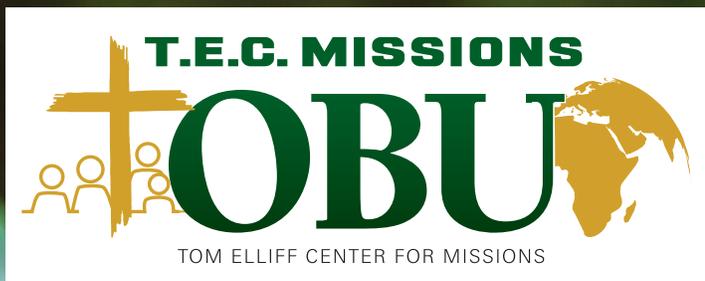
Distinguished Service Award

The same guidelines for the Hall of Fame nominees will be used for the Distinguished Service Award, with the exception of letter a.

During a special luncheon held each year at the Oklahoma Baptists' annual meeting in November the Oklahoma Baptist Historical Commission recognizes the HOF inductees and presents the Distinguished Service Award to the person who has shown consistently faithful service through the years.

Following the annual meeting, an article about the DSA recipient will also be printed in *The Oklahoma Baptist Chronicle*.

For additional information, please contact Bob Nigh, Oklahoma Baptists' Historical Secretary, at 405/990-0123. [m](#)



Join Us

Thursday, March 30

3:30-5:00 pm

Geiger Center

Oklahoma Baptist University

Guest Speaker Dr. John Brady

*Vice President for Global Engagement
for the International Mission Board, SBC*

At the conclusion of the forum, we will celebrate the **one-year anniversary** of the Tom Elliff Center for Missions. You will be blessed in hearing from Dr. Tom Elliff and the testimonies of our students. We will conclude with light refreshments and a time of fellowship. A special gift will be given to everyone as you leave.



REGISTER
HERE



Coming event

MARCH 26. Oklahoma City, Southern Hills, 8601 South Pennsylvania, will be hosting Singing and Praising Sunday Celebration, from 7-8:30 p.m. This will be a free intergenerational worship event led by legendary Oklahoma Baptist worship leader Bill Green and the Singing and Praising Choir. Fernando Ortega, Dove Award-winning singer and songwriter, will be a special guest. 



OKLAHOMANS SERVE AS IMB MISSIONARIES IN MALAWI. Chris and Jamie Schilt grew up in Oklahoma Baptist churches. They now serve as International Mission Board missionaries in Malawi. A heralded event among Malawi Baptists is Youth Day, as children and students take on leadership roles in the church that day. In the top photo, Chris and Jamie's daughter Selah, 14, right, leads a children's Sunday School class. In the bottom photo, their son Isaiah, 11, left, preached a sermon with Yunus serving as translator. 

VOLUNTEER MISSIONS OPPORTUNITIES

OKLAHOMA

On-going opportunities for volunteers:

Baptist Village Communities:

- Ada—Tracy Scheer, 580/332-6004
- Broken Arrow—Monty Baggett, 918/355-0099
- Cleveland—Danna Ellis, 918/358-2575
- Cordell—Alicia Holt, 580/832-5831
- Elk City—Cathy Henderson, 580/225-5555
- Grove (Honey Creek)—Gary Mishler, 918/786-2223
- Madill (Lake Texoma)—Alandra Needham, 580/564-3776
- Miami—Shane McGhee, 918/542-7124
- OKC—Chris Finley, 405/721-2466 ext 2115
- Okmulgee—Matthew Wood, 918/756-5377
- Owasso—Steven Walkingstick, 918/272-2281 ext 102
- Entrusted Hearts (Home Health Care)—Shannon Ryan, 405/942-3000 ext 4685

DISASTER RELIEF

Training:

March 25—Disaster Relief Orientation & Credentialing—8:30 a.m.–12 noon; Pryor, First, 601 E. Graham Ave.

April 1—First Aid/CPR Class – 9 a.m.–3 p.m.—\$20 DR Team Center, 7180 NW Expressway, Okarche

To register, email Darrell Knapp, dknapp711@gmail.com

April 15—Disaster Relief Orientation & Credentialing—8:30 a.m. – 12 noon; Stillwater, Countryside, 2124 S. Western

April 22—First Aid/CPR Class – 9 a.m.–3 p.m.—\$20 DR Team Center, 7180 NW Expressway, Okarche

To register, email Darrell Knapp, dknapp711@gmail.com

Messenger Insight Podcast

Women's Retreat

Hear Amy Cordova and Jamy Fisher share plans for the upcoming Women's Retreat on April 21-22 at Falls Creek, as well as discuss the spiritual impact of this annual retreat.

Listen now on...



OKLAHOMA BAPTISTS

WOMEN'S RETREAT

INSIGHT podcast

APRIL 21-22, 2023

OKLAHOMABAPTISTS.ORG/WOMEN