



# THE BAPTIST MESSENGER

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**DISASTER  
RELIEF  
SERVES OBU  
AND OTHER  
OK AREAS  
AFFECTED  
BY APRIL 19  
TORNADOES**



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# DR serves OBU and other OK areas affected by April 19 tornadoes

>> by Bob Nigh  
**CONTRIBUTING WRITER**

SHAWNEE— Eight confirmed tornadoes slashed across Oklahoma's mid-section the evening of Wed., April 19, inflicting major damage to structures at Oklahoma Baptist University (OBU) and to other sections of Shawnee. Those twisters were among at least 15 tornadoes reported in Oklahoma, Kansas and Iowa.

An EF3 tornado also swept through the town of Cole, destroying many buildings and, tragically, taking the lives of three persons in McClain County.

In the wake of the severe tornado damage in Cole and at OBU, Oklahoma Baptist Disaster Relief (DR) volunteers were on the ground assessing damage and seeking to help in a variety of ways by the following morning. That was in addition to DR volunteers who already had served in chainsaw and ash out as a result of recent wildfires in Central Oklahoma and in debris removal in Arkansas following a widespread and deadly historic tornado outbreak the week of March 31-April 1.

Jason Yarbrough, state director, said Oklahoma DR volunteers had returned to the state on April 15 after five teams completed two weeks of ministry at North Little Rock, Ark., Levy. Oklahoma DR chainsaw volunteers completed 135 work orders, and the large Oklahoma feeding unit was set up in conjunction with feeding units from Arkansas and Texas.

"Our feeding teams prepared 1,084 meals for volunteers and 1,000 meals for the public," Yarbrough said, adding that DR volunteers washed and dried 184 loads of laundry, provided 427 showers, and that ministry contacts totaled 267, with four persons making a profession of faith.

Three ash out teams—one from Texas Baptist Men—are working after the wildfires in the Edmond area, along with an Incident Management Team (IMT) and a small feeding unit.

"Here at home, our trained volunteers were ready to be part of a coordinated response to the devastation in Shawnee and other areas," Yarbrough said. "We are heartbroken for our OBU family—and for our friends and neighbors who were affected across Oklahoma—and we will be working to provide all the help and hope people need."

"Callout" chaplains were dispatched to Cole, First on Fri., April 21 and in Shawnee on April 21-22, seeking people to whom they could minister and pray with. Other chaplains also accompanied assessor and chainsaw/debris removal teams in Shawnee, operating out of Shawnee, Immanuel.

Oklahoma Baptist DR chaplaincy coordinator Debbie Inselman explained that "callout" chaplains is "a new type of chaplaincy in which chaplains, ideally working in pairs, walk/drive through neighborhoods and business areas and visit with and minister to those impacted by the storms."

The Oklahoma mass feeding team is preparing 1,500-2,000 meals for both lunch and dinner, which are being delivered to both Shawnee and Cole communities. One chainsaw team, a small feeding unit and an IMT are working in Cole.

"We will have 110-120 volunteers in the field this week, with the same number planned for next week. We want to share the love of Jesus and




>> PHOTO: BRIAN HOBBS  
DR volunteers started working on Thursday, April 20, cleaning up the OBU campus after the April 19 tornadoes inflicted damage in Shawnee and in other areas across the state.

the Gospel as we serve people at their point of need," Yarbrough added.

"This is the worst natural disaster that OBU has faced in its 113-year history," Oklahoma Baptists' executive director-treasurer Todd Fisher reported to Oklahoma Baptist personnel. "I am so grateful to report that there have been no casualties or even reported injuries. OBU's Emergency Response System worked as it should, sending alerts and instructions in plenty of time for students and staff to get to safety. All students, faculty, and staff are accounted for. We thank the Lord for His protection!"

"Four buildings have structural damage, including Raley Chapel and Shawnee Hall. OBU administration is working with expert professionals to address structural damage, roofs, and the clean-up process. A significant amount of work clearing the campus of debris has already taken place. As usual, our Oklahoma Baptist Disaster Relief teams were on site immediately and have made a huge difference in the opening hours after the crisis of this storm."

Oklahomans needing to request assistance from DR can visit [okdisasterhelp.org/request-assistance](http://okdisasterhelp.org/request-assistance). On that website, people may also make a tax-deductible donation to Oklahoma Baptist DR relief efforts. 

# Rite of passage: One-eyed generation



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I was coming out of a store the other day when a horde of green- and brown-uniformed girls attacked me to ask if I would buy their cookies. I don't mean "attack" in the military sense but in that of skillfully separating one from the contents of his or her wallet.

There must be a Cookie Boot Camp where these girls are drilled in the art of salesmanship. I picture instructors who help them master the technique of approaching each customer with a wide, innocent smile. The girls learn how to tilt their heads slightly to one side after making the pitch, combined with what's known in the cookie world as "puppy-dog eyes." In other words, anyone who dares to say "no" risks the wrath of God. These little saleswomen also learn to use the words "mister" and "please" in the proper combination: "Please, mister, would you buy some of our cookies?" Their training is so successful that you don't know whether to buy their cookies, adopt them or pay their way through college.

I bought a box. Not because I wanted to and not even because the cookie girls smiled at me. I bought them to invest in the future. And not their future, but mine. I bought them because one of these days, my kids will stick me in a nursing home. By then, some of these brown- and green-uniformed girls will be old enough to be nurses. When one of them comes into my room, I'll say, "You look familiar. Did you sell cookies when you were a little girl?" If she says, "Yes," I'll tell her, "I thought I recognized those eyes and that beautiful smile."

I'll also remind her that years ago, she sold me a box of cookies. In fact, I'll remind her of that day every time I

see her. I hope she'll spread the word to the other nurses and orderlies: "Be nice to Mr. Moore in room 202, because when I was younger, he was kind enough to buy a box of cookies from me."

So yes, when I made my purchase, I was thinking about how good those cookies were going to taste. And at the same time, I was keeping an eye toward the future. I'm a big fan of thinking ahead. And I learned this art from the Bible.

A wise person walks with one eye on the immediate and the other on the future. Scripture has a lot to say about this: "A man reaps what he sows" (Gal. 6:7). "Whoever loses their life will preserve it" (Luke 17:33).

A farmer always plants with one eye on the immediate and the other on the future, when the harvest will come. As we read in Matthew 7, a builder does the same thing. If you build your house upon the sand, it will eventually crumble. But if you build your house upon the rock, it will stand the test of time. When you live with one eye on the immediate and the other cast toward eternity, you'll have a framework for making good and wise decisions. Today's choice is tomorrow's consequence, good or bad.

Do you look at things in the temporary, the immediate, or do you keep one eye fixed on the lens of eternity? "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal" (Matt. 6:19-20).



When we changed from an agricultural society to an industrial one, we lost the concept of keeping one eye on the road ahead. We only have an eye on the immediate, the efficient and the path of least resistance. With the arrival of microwave ovens, instant oatmeal, fast food, Twitter, Facebook and texting, our lives have shifted more and more to the immediate until we've become a one-eyed society. We give little thought to the consequences of today's actions. We have a vision problem: we can't see.

I often watch this played out through the lives of people who have maxed out their credit cards, not realizing a day of reckoning will come: "What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul?" (Matt. 8:36).

Teaching your children this idea of walking with one eye on the future isn't easy. You don't have to teach them to keep their eyes on the immediate; that came with the Fall. But if you want them to be like Jesus, teach them to keep one eye focused on Him.

Besides, that way, maybe they won't notice that you ate the entire box of Thin Mints. [m](#)

## Rummage to be nominated for 2024 SBC Pastors' Conf. presidency



Oklahoma City, Quail Springs pastor Stephen Rummage will be nominated at the 2023 Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Pastors' Conference for the presidency of next year's pastors' conference.

Since Rummage became the pastor of Quail Springs in March 2019, the church has added 1,032 members, including 365 additions through baptism. QSBC currently has 3,743 resident members. In 2021 and 2022, the church gave more than \$1 million annually through the Cooperative Program of the SBC, representing 13.5 percent of the church's undesignated receipts.

The 2024 SBC Pastors' Conference is scheduled to be held June 9-10 in Indianapolis, Ind., in conjunction with the 2024 SBC Annual Meeting, June 11-12. [m](#)

## Coming events

**APRIL 30.** The Oklahoma Baptist Children's Chorus will have their 10th anniversary season finale concert at Oklahoma City, Village at 6:30 p.m. A "reunion choir" will also perform that evening, and there will be a time of recognition for Wynn Anne Hook, as she has served as the director of the Children's Chorus throughout the 10 years. More than 450 students have participated in the Children's Chorus since it began 10 years ago. [m](#)

**MAY 6-7.** Great Plains Association is hosting Round Up for Jesus Rodeo Weekend at Beutler Bros. Arena in Elk City. The rodeo starts at 7 p.m. For more information, call 580/243-9023 or visit [iprarodeo.com](http://iprarodeo.com). [m](#)

## VOLUNTEER MISSIONS OPPORTUNITIES

### OKLAHOMA

On-going opportunities for volunteers:

**Camp Gibson, Hardesty** –Tom Freeman– 580/338-6259 – [pbaok221@gmail.com](mailto:pbaok221@gmail.com)

**Families Feeding Families Meal Center, Durant** – 580/230-9142 – [familiesfeedingfamilies.org](http://familiesfeedingfamilies.org)

**Hope Pregnancy Centers** - South OKC 405/688-8700, North OKC 405/755-5433, Edmond 405/330-0200, Ardmore 580/223-7232, Tulsa 918/622-3325

#### Oklahoma Baptist Homes for Children Campuses

Oklahoma City – 405/691-7781  
Edmond – 405/341-3606  
Madill – 580/564-2218  
Owasso – 918/272-2233

### DISASTER RELIEF

Training:

**Sept. 16**—Disaster Relief Orientation & Credentialing – 8:30 a.m. – noon, Weatherford, First, 1510 E. Davis Ave.

**Sept. 21-23**—Chaplain Manual & Operational Stress First Aid – \$60, Baptist Building, 3800 N. May Ave., Oklahoma City  
To register, email [pjones@oklahomabaptists.org](mailto:pjones@oklahomabaptists.org)

**Sept. 23** – 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](mailto:dknapp711@gmail.com)

**Oct. 14**—Disaster Relief Orientation & Credentialing – 8:30 a.m. – noon, DR Team Center, 7180 NW Expressway, Okarche

**Oct. 21** – 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](mailto:dknapp711@gmail.com)

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