



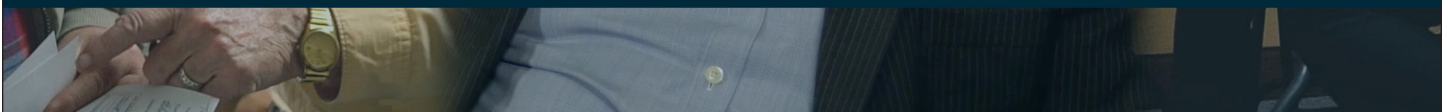
THE BAPTIST MESSENGER

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DIGITAL EDITION • MAY 10, 2023



BEARDSLEY'S BENEVOLENCE MINISTRY SAW ABUNDANT FRUIT



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Beardsley's benevolence ministry saw abundant fruit

>> by Bob Nigh

CONTRIBUTING WRITER

DEL CITY—Wilson Hull Beardsley Jr., 96, was born on Sept. 4, 1926 to Wilson H. and Ellen Marie Pinkerton Beardsley in Houston, Texas. He died on April 30, 2023. His funeral was May 6 at Del City, First Southern.

Keith Burkhart, First Southern's lead pastor, announced Beardsley's passing in a Facebook post: "Wilson will always be remembered as a giant of the faith, serving his Lord and his church family at First Southern for more than 50 years. He was a friend, mentor and pastor to our entire congregation, and we will miss him greatly until we see him again in eternity. Meanwhile, we celebrate that he is free today, and we take comfort in the knowledge that he is currently and forevermore rejoicing with his Lord."

During a half-century of ministry at First Southern, Beardsley estimated he baptized more than 4,000 new believers.

Beardsley always said his greatest joy was leading people to the Lord through the benevolence ministry and evangelism. Don Williams, former chaplaincy specialist and Disaster Relief director with Oklahoma Baptists, once said Beardsley, who also was a Disaster Relief chaplain, was "one of the most evangelistic chaplains" he ever met.

"That's just what Wilson does," Williams said, prior to Beardsley's death.

"He goes where he believes God is calling him to go, and God puts people in his path to share Jesus with them. He is a true ambassador for Christ. He meets people where they are. In a disaster, if they need food or clothing, he is an ingenious person who works to try to meet the needs of people so he can share the Gospel with them. Wherever he goes, he tries to meet the need, and the need is how he gets to share Christ."

In a July 2015 article in the *Baptist Messenger*, Beardsley said he had been, "in the ministry since age 23 or 24. I'll be 89 in September, and there's nothing in the Bible about retirement."

Then, taking on a serious tone with an air of gratitude and awe, he added, "The reason I'm still in the ministry is because I'm leading more people to the Lord now than I ever have before in my entire life."

He attributed that to First Southern's benevolence outreach, which included a clothing ministry every Tuesday, and food ministry on Wednesdays and Thursdays.

"It's because we have a natural fishing tank called benevolence. People come because they're broke or have had family difficulties, or they're just out of prison or jail, or they have some kind of problem that has really knocked them for a loop, and they're wide open to the Gospel," he explained. "We divide our ministry between counseling and giving the clothing and food carts."


The ministry basically began when Beardsley first came to the church.

"When I started as administrator, I would run over to the grocery store just across the street and buy \$20 worth of food and bring it back to a family," he said. "We just had a few families—two or three a week—stop by and ask for food."

The food service ministry grew to where it provided a shopping cart full of food to about 35-40 families two days a week. Families also had the option to choose up to five garments per family member, twice a year from the clothing ministry on Tuesdays. First Southern members contributed good, used and nearly new items to the ministry.

Beardsley kept detailed records of gospel presentations and professions of faith, submitting reports to the church and Oklahoma Baptists' chaplaincy office, which supported the ministry quarterly through Hunger Funds provided by the North American Mission Board.

Statistics during just one four-year period showed that 349 people accepted Christ in 2012 through the First Southern food service ministry; 424 in both 2013 and 2014 and 173 through June 30 of 2015, for a total of 1,370.

"The Lord has blessed me so much that I don't deserve it," he exclaimed at the time. "I enjoy immensely what I am doing." 

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Rite of passage: Slight mistake



Walker Moore

Author & *Messenger* Columnist
Email | walker@back40.org
@WalkerDeanMoore

Lately, I've been a little concerned about my health. I went to the eye doctor, and he told me I have a slight cataract. Now, there are certain words and phrases you don't like to hear from your doctor during an exam. You don't want to hear, "Oh, no!" or "Wow, I've never seen anything like this before."

Even the word *slight* didn't make me feel good at all. Exactly what is a *slight* heart attack, a *slight* stroke or a *slight* cataract? As far as I can tell, it's nothing more than a way for a doctor to say, "Hey buddy, it could have been a lot worse."

In addition to my vision problems, I have been concerned about my weight and blood pressure. I have been exercising and cut out all soft drinks except the Diet Rite I had at a birthday party. Diet Rite: the soft drink with no caffeine, no calories, no sodium and no taste.

Next, I noticed my blood pressure climbing. I have never had high blood pressure or high cholesterol; in fact, I have enjoyed great health most of my life. But with Adam's curse now personally affecting me, I began to pay more attention to my lifestyle.

I bought one of those fancy blood pressure cuffs that wrap around your

wrist. Every night, I put it on, pushed the button and let it whiz and whirl. I felt my blood pumping as the machine took its reading. The numbers popped onto the screen, and the cuff deflated.

I recorded my blood pressure every night. After several weeks of high readings, I became alarmed. I recently had dinner with a doctor and told him about my concerns. He recommended that I visit my regular doctor. One morning, my blood pressure was 171/101, a near-dangerous level.

I went to see my doctor. He took my blood pressure and asked what was wrong. When I told him about the high readings, he said, "There is nothing wrong with your blood pressure. In fact, it is great!" He checked it three times and found it normal every time. He asked me to go home, get my blood pressure cuff and come back.

The next day, I returned to his office to compare my readings to the ones from his machine. We soon discovered that my blood pressure cuff was defective and had given false readings all along. I didn't have high blood pressure after all. I am healthy as a horse . . . except for a "slight" weight problem.


The false readings caused weeks of concern for nothing. The doctor told me to throw away my machine. He said the only accurate blood pressure readings come from a stethoscope and cuff wrapped to fit your arm, not from a machine at the drugstore or in your home.

The blood pressure problem I didn't have reminds me of the lies the enemy tells us as parents. He pushes us to value the things of the world rather than the treasures we have in Heaven. Before long, the world becomes our gauge.

God gave His Holy Word as the true gauge and standard for your family's life together. The enemy whispers, "It's only a phase" or, "It's okay to let your children go against your values just this once." We let our guard down based on a false standard . . . and little attitudes grow up to be big ones.

Sometimes, the world's gauge gives another false reading. Because we value the things of the world, we work hard to provide our children with bigger and better material things. We want them to play on the best sports teams, have the best music teachers, go to the best schools and, one day, attend the best colleges.

God has placed the desire to provide for your children deep within you. Are you measuring your life according to a bigger, better standard that fades away or the truths of His eternal Word? Do your children know that you delight in the Lord, or do they watch you chase success, power or some other hunger that drives you to destruction?

Parents, God has appointed you the gatekeepers for your children's hearts. Measure life according to His standards. He never gives a false reading, and His gauge measures accurately . . . every time. 

The Tom Elliff Center for Missions is pleased to invite ALL Pastors to a "Smokin' Joe's Dinner" Tuesday evenings in June and July at Falls Creek.

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OBCC celebrates 10 years with reunion concert



>> PHOTOS: CHRIS DOYLE

1) Current members and alumni of the Oklahoma Baptist Children's Chorus participate in the reunion concert; 2) OBCC sings a favorite number, 'Count to Ten'; 3) Wynn Anne Hook is honored by Randy Lind, Oklahoma Baptists' worship & music ministry partner, for Hook's 10 years of leading OBCC.

>> by Chris Doyle
MANAGING EDITOR

Current members and alumni of Oklahoma Baptist Children's Chorus (OBCC) participated in OBCC's 10th anniversary reunion concert at Oklahoma City, Village, April 30. The choir loft was filled with singing voices representing the decade of this talented group. Many are now in their 20s and are involved in churches' worship ministries.

The program featured many hymns and well-known songs, including "Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing," "The Lord's Prayer," "Count to Ten," "May the Peoples Praise You," "Elijah Rock!" and the concluding number "As We Go."

Wynn Anne Hook has been the director of OBCC all 10 years, and Randy Lind, Oklahoma Baptists' worship and

music ministry partner, reported at the concert he hopes Hook will lead OBCC for many more years.

For more information on OBCC, visit oklahomabaptists.org/obcc. 

Campers on Mission enjoy spring rally at Macomb, Romulus

>> by Carolyn Vanderburg
OKLAHOMA CAMPERS ON MISSION

MACOMB—Oklahoma Campers on Mission (COM) spring rally was hosted by Macomb, Romulus, April 11-14. The church parking lot provided spots for nine RVs, and meals were provided by the members of Romulus.

With 45 members attending, several of the members completed the re-siding of the church at Sparks, First and installing water fountains along with bathroom repairs at Romulus.

The sewing crew completed two special projects taught by Reita Barnes. The zippered bags and cold/heating "corn" packs will become a new source of interest for contributions toward Christmas toy stores and Samaritans Purse Boxes.

On Wednesday evening, camper Ken Hudson led the group in group hymn singing. James Wilder, associational mission strategist in Pott-Lincoln Association, addressed the group



>> PHOTO: PROVIDED

From left, Rita and Harold Poling and David Weiss participate in the Oklahoma Campers on Mission at Macomb, Romulus, April 11-14.

and encouraged participation in sharing God's Word in our daily lives.


Construction manager David Kirkegard gave a review of completed projects since September, including Youth Annex at Romulus; Broken Arrow, County Line; Baptist Village Communities; McAlester, Second; Sparks, First; and CrossTimbers Children's Mission Adventure Camp near Davis. Campers contributed 38 days of construction for a total of 2,365 working hours.

Sewing manager Carolyn Vanderburg gave a review of the 303 hours


members spent creating 126 items for donations. The members sewed receiving blankets for Baptist Hospital, bags for expecting mothers for Hope Pregnancy Centers, quilts for nursing homes, along with remote control-cell phone bags for residents. These are ongoing mission projects that are often completed by campers while at home.


The rally was entertained by gospel music from the Pott County Pickers led by COM member Andy Reich. His group led singing of hymns and current day worship selections of praise.


The campers enjoyed a full course breakfast hosted by Romulus and were led to worship and encouraged to continue advancing the Great Commission by camper David Weiss. In 2022, Oklahoma Campers on Mission contributed 8,792 hours toward that mission.

For those interested in building, sewing, evangelizing and lively fellowship, call Paul Day at 405/509-0396 to join Oklahoma Campers on Mission. 

Coming events

MAY 28. Bethany, Council Road will be celebrating its 60th anniversary with activities beginning at 8:30 a.m. at the CUBE, located at 7903 N.W. 30th. Worship service begins at 10:30 a.m. in the main church auditorium, featuring music with songs from the past six decades. A video will be shown featuring former pastors and charter members. There will also be a display of photographs of the church's history. The church is located at 2900 N. Council Road. 

JUNE 10. Norman, Cornerstone Indian will host Following the Trail men's and boys' conference, 7 a.m.-4 p.m. Featured speaker is Bubba Burcham, men's ministry consultant for Oklahoma Baptists. Breakout sessions and activities will be featured, and breakfast and lunch will be served. Suggested donation of \$25 for men and \$15 for boys (ages 12-18). The church is located at 17020 E. Tecumseh Road. 

JUNE 13. Norman, Cornerstone Indian will host Preserved Blameless Senior Adult Conference, 8 a.m.-3 p.m. Speakers include Pastor Ledkey McIntosh and Lt. Kim Lopez of Cleveland County Sheriff's Office. Worship will be led by Native Praise. Special topics include mental health, medicare/insurance, burial costs/planning, chair volleyball demo, personal safety/crime prevention. The event will offer free health screenings. Breakfast and lunch will be served. No cost to attend. 

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OKLAHOMA

On-going opportunities for volunteers:

Tulakogee Conference Center, Wagoner—918/462-3212—info@tulakogee.com

The Spring, a faith-based shelter for women who are victims of domestic violence or human sexual trafficking and their children, Sand Springs—Mychaela Burris —918/947-4679 .

Hospitality House of Tulsa provides family centered lodging, emotional and spiritual support for family members of patients traveling to Tulsa for medical care—918/794-0088 or hhtulsa.org.

Hospitality House of Oklahoma provides for the physical, spiritual needs of families with loved ones incarcerated in McAlester. Lodging available—918/429-0142.

OK Jail & Prison Ministry needs volunteers to share the Gospel—405-917-2242 or ojpm@ojpm.org.

DISASTER RELIEF

Training:

June 15-16—Assisting Individuals in Crisis—9 a.m.-4 p.m.—\$50
Baptist Building, 3800 N. May Ave.

To register, email pjones@oklahomabaptists.org
(Continuing education for those who have completed Chaplain Manual and OSFA)

Sept. 16—Disaster Relief Orientation & Credentialing – 8:30 a.m. – 12 noon; Weatherford, First, 1510 E. Davis Ave.
Register at okdisasterhelp.org

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