



# THE BAPTIST MESSENGER

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## Young people 'Answered' the call:

558 attend The Call Conference  
August 26 at OBU



**Rummage joins  
Oklahoma Baptist  
pastors who  
previously served  
as SBC Pastors'  
Conference President**

>> CHRIS DOYLE



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offers two Aug.  
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college students, Sept. 8**

>> CARISSA JONES

# Young people 'Answered' the call: 558 attend The Call Conference Aug. 26 at OBU



>> PHOTOS: 1, 4-6) CHRIS DOYLE; 2-3) DOMINIC GRAZIANO  
 1) Albert Mohler challenged students to fulfill their calling to serve God; 2) The Call Conference had 558 people attend on Aug. 26 at OBU; 3) The Call Conference offered 14 breakout sessions, most since the event began in 2010; 4) Rusty Gunn led a breakout on Church Planting; 5) Matt Emerson led a breakout titled 'Called to Obedience'; 6) Sarah Hagar led a breakout on children's ministry.

>> by Chris Doyle  
**MANAGING EDITOR**

SHAWNEE—For a call to be effective, there must be an answer. That was the emphasis of the theme, “Answer: Calling Out the Called” for The Call Conference in 2023.

Oklahoma Baptist University (OBU) hosted 558 attendees who represented 99 churches for The Call Conference on Aug. 26. For 13 years, this event has helped young people who are called by God to serve in ministry and in missions.

Brian Baldwin, who serves as student evangelism and missions partner for Oklahoma Baptists, said The Call Conference “meets the needs for those who are trying to discover or deepen their call.”

“It was one of the most successful Call Conferences we have ever had,” Baldwin said. “There were more breakouts than we ever had.”

Fourteen breakout sessions covered topics including “Called to Obedience (New Believer’s Track),” “Children,” “Evangelism,” “Pastoral,” “God’s Call in God’s Word,” “Leading Those Called (for youth leaders),” “Missions,” “Church Planting,” “Small Town Ministry,” “The

Way God Calls,” “Women & Ministry,” “Worship,” “Media” and “Youth.”

“The Call Conference offers tangible guidance and instruction for churches that are trying to figure out what to do with kids who are called to the ministry,” Baldwin said. “These kids are searching for God’s will. Everybody is called to ministry and missions; some are called to full-time ministry and to the mission field. The Call Conference helps students discern exactly what God is calling them to do, and this is one of the most critical seasons as well.”

Baldwin said there are more pastors over the age of 65 than there are pastors under the age of 40. Pastors under 40 make up 15 percent of all current pastors of churches today.

“We need the next generation to answer the call,” he said.

General session speakers for The Call Conference included Shane Pruitt, well-known youth speaker who serves as national next gen director for the North American Mission Board; Elbert Smith, director of OBU’s Tom Elliff Center for Missions; and Albert Mohler, president of Southern Seminary.

“Shane did a good job talking about affirming God’s call,” Baldwin said. “Elbert Smith spoke on growing in the calling. He has trained more missionaries than anybody on the planet.”

Mohler concluded The Call Conference offering a challenge to all young people who attended, making sure they fulfill their calling to serve God.

“If God has called you, then waste no time in doing other things,” Mohler said. “We need as many people to go (in full-time ministry and missions) as quickly as possible.

“We are living in a strange cultural moment,” Mohler continued. “I don’t know how long we are going to have some of the freedoms we have now with preaching the Gospel. It may be that you need to arrive not only on time but just in time. I want you to know how encouraging you are to me. I am incredibly thankful that I have been a part of seeing what God is doing in this room. He may use somebody in this room to change the world.”



# Rummage joins Oklahoma Baptist pastors who previously served as SBC Pastors' Conference president

>> by Chris Doyle  
**MANAGING EDITOR**

The Pastors' Conference of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) has been in existence since 1935. M.E. Dodd served as the first president of the SBC Pastors' Conference for the first 14 meetings.

Dodd was replaced by legendary Oklahoma Baptist pastor Herschel Hobbs who served as the Pastors' Conference president for 1950-51. Eventually, the term to serve as president of the Pastors' Conference became a one-year duration. Looking at the list of past conference presidents, there have been 10 who at some point in their ministries were pastors of Oklahoma Baptist churches.

Along with Hobbs, John Bisagno (1972), Bailey Smith (1978), Jimmy Draper (1980), O.S. Hawkins (1985), Tom Elliff (1990), Jack Graham (1992), Claude Thomas (1998), Michael Catt (2008) and John Meador (2016) make up the list of Oklahoma Baptist pastors who served as SBC Pastors' Conference presidents. In 2024, Stephen Rummage will be the 11th Oklahoma Baptist pastor to join the ranks.

"It's a great honor to serve as the president of the Pastors' Conference for a variety of reasons," said Rummage, who has been senior pastor of Oklahoma City, Quail Springs since 2019. "One is because it's an honor to bless fellow pastors across the SBC and put together a program that will encourage them and strengthen their ministries.

"Looking from a historical perspective and see the men who have served as the president of the Pastors' Conference and even specifically to look at the men who have served in Oklahoma churches, it's just a humbling thing," Rummage continued. "I have incredible respect for these men. God has used many of them personally in my life."

## Praying for pastors

Serving as the SBC Pastors' Conference president, Rummage expressed a heartfelt commitment to support pas-

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tors in prayer. One way this is demonstrated is through setting up a dedicated online prayer request form, allowing pastors and church leaders to share specific needs. The form can be found [here](#).

Rummage said the idea of praying for SBC pastors originated when he was being nominated for his presidential role.

"I wanted to look for ways to pray meaningfully for pastors, and I wondered, if given the opportunity, guys would reach out to let me know how to pray for them," he said.

In the past three months, Rummage has received more than 125 prayer requests from pastors all over the country.

"Pastors are requesting prayer for all kinds of things," he said. "They want God to use them for His glory in the churches where they serve. They are asking prayer for their families and for health issues. They are asking prayer for God to use them to bring people to know Jesus as Savior. A recurring request is keeping faithful in what God has called them to do."

## 'Faithful' is the conference theme

Rummage said the theme of the SBC Pastors' Conference will be "Faithful," based on Rev. 17:14, "... for He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those with Him are called and chosen and faithful."

"We are going to highlight different areas of faithfulness," Rummage said. "Preachers at the Pastors' Conference will address these different areas. As we do so, we will also take time to pray for one another as pastors, that we will continue to be faithful to God in those areas."

Rummage is building the program for the 2024 Pastors' Conference. He said he is planning to feature 11 speakers.



>> PHOTO: PROVIDED  
Stephen Rummage will be the 10th Oklahoma Baptist pastor to serve as the SBC Pastors' Conference president.

"We are in the process of putting together who the speakers will be," he said. "We will release those names as we get closer to the time of the Pastors' Conference. We are going to have preachers who stand firmly on the inherency, authority and sufficiency of the Bible and who love Southern Baptists and love the work of Southern Baptist churches."

Rummage appreciates those involved in planning the Pastors' Conference, including SBC executive committee staff members. Heather Janson, project manager of the 2023 Pastors' Conference, will be serving in the same role next year. Patrick Janson, associate pastor at Coweta, First, is Heather's husband.

## The importance of the SBC Pastors' Conference

Rummage was asked what role the SBC Pastors' Conference has in relation to the SBC Annual Meeting, as the Pastors' Conference meets for two days before the Annual Meeting.

"They are separate events, but in Southern Baptist life, our mission flows from our fellowship," he replied. "As we strengthen our fellowship together, we are also able to focus more intently and intentionally on the mission God has given us of reaching our nation and our world with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

"If we try to have a mission without having fellowship, then the mission becomes cold and sterile. But when there's a warm fellowship, it ignites what we do in terms of mission. We can fellowship as we gather around the Word of God and hear the Word of God speak to us as it is preached from the pulpit and as we worship the Lord together."

More information will be featured in the coming months on the 2024 SBC Pastors' Conference at [sbcpc.net](http://sbcpc.net).

# Literacy Missions offers two Aug. workshops



>> PHOTOS: PROVIDED

1) The Aug. 4-5 workshop attendees, from left. **Back row:** Brian Rice, Thomas Mobly, Hai Luong, Cathy Miller, David Christhilf. **Third row:** Adrienne Cooper, Morrie Feigel, Carol Sallee, Diana Thun, Jessica Blombren. **Second row:** Jennifer Keahbone, Shila Walker, Tamara Gelnar, Melanie Sholaut, Tracey Shell, Sally Williamson, Sharon Steinle. **Front row:** Avery Turner, Aileen Sadler, Barbara Glenn, Sharon Powers, Fiorella Muse, Quinn Bradley, Denice Tomson, Stacy Neuschaefer; 2) The Aug. 18-19 workshop attendees, from left. **Back Row:** Janet Deel, Terry Crawford, Rick Crawford, Gregory Rogers, Anna Powell, David Niles, Karen Waits; **Front row:** Barbar Marlett, Merlynn Nelson-Ryan, Earlene Mitchum, Nancy Frey, LaFrantz Taylor.

>> by Staff

Oklahoma Baptists Literacy Missions recently offered two workshops, training volunteers to share the Gospel while meeting the practical need of literacy in people’s lives.

On Aug. 4-5, an English as a Second Language Workshop was led by Stacy Neuschaefer and Avery Turner at Edmond,

Henderson Hills, training 23 people from eight churches. On Aug. 18-19, a Tutoring Children and Youth Workshop was led by Barbara Marlett and Cheryl Wilkinson at Mustang, First, training 11 people from two churches.

More information about Literacy Missions can be found at [oklahomabaptists.org/evangelism/literacy](http://oklahomabaptists.org/evangelism/literacy). 

# Momentum draws 900 college students, Sept. 8

>> by Carissa Jones


**OKLAHOMA BAPTISTS COLLEGIATE MINISTRIES ASSISTANT**

Momentum, an annual statewide worship gathering for college students and young adults was held Friday, Sept. 8 at Yukon, Trinity. This year, approximately 900 attended and were led in worship by Cody Dunbar and heard two messages from Tommy Woodard.

“Momentum is such a great fall semester kickoff for Oklahoma Collegiate Ministries across the state,” said Cris Lowery, Collegiate Ministries director for Oklahoma Baptists. “It’s inspiring

to see so many students and leaders worshipping God and accepting the challenge to make a difference in the lives of students around them.



“It’s a great reminder that the strength of Oklahoma College Ministries is God working through so many dedicated church and campus-based ministry leaders. It’s humbling to stand in the same room with them and dream about what God will do in the days ahead through this group of people.” 



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# Coming events



Larry DeLawder Family Matt Carroll Family

**SEPT. 17.** Perry, Sumner, 20325 Co Rd 200, is hosting a gospel music concert featuring the Larry DeLawder Family and the Matt Carroll Family. Concert will begin at 11 a.m. [m](#)

**OCT. 1-4.** Oklahoma City, South Lindsay is hosting a revival featuring evangelist Leon Shade with music by Tom White. Services on Sunday, Oct. 1, will be 10:15 a.m. and 5 p.m. On Monday and Tuesday, Oct. 2-3, the services will be 7 p.m. A youth night event will be Oct. 4, beginning at 6:30 p.m. with a special concert at 7:30 p.m. featuring The Gray Havens. Concert is \$25. For more information contact Pastor Mike Price at 405/249-9217. [m](#)

**OCT. 21.** Tulsa, Evergreen is hosting a livestream event called "Legacy Grandparenting Summit," in conjunction with Tony Evans and Dallas, Texas, Oak Cliff. The event will be 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m. For more information contact Jerry Boyd at [jboyd@evergreenbc.org](mailto:jboyd@evergreenbc.org). [m](#)

**OCT. 24.** Oklahoma City, Quail Springs invites churches, businesses, non-profits and volunteers to "Leading Forward," Oklahoma City's premiere business leadership forum. The event begins at 7:30 a.m. with breakfast and concludes at 11:30 a.m. Former NBA player Walter Bond will be a keynote speaker along with Pastor Stephen Rummage. A panel of Oklahoma leadership experts will follow. For more information visit [qsbc.org/leadingforward](http://qsbc.org/leadingforward). [m](#)

## VOLUNTEER MISSIONS OPPORTUNITIES

### OKLAHOMA

On-going opportunities for volunteers:

Tulakogee Conference Center, Wagoner—918/462-3212 or [info@tulakogee.com](mailto: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](http://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](mailto:ojpm@ojpm.org).

### DISASTER RELIEF

Training:

**Sept. 14**—Chaplaincy Refresher Course \$10—Baptist Building\*\*

To register, please email [pjones@oklahomabaptists.org](mailto:pjones@oklahomabaptists.org)

**Sept. 16**—Disaster Relief Orientation & Credentialing – 8:30

a.m. – 2:30 p.m., Weatherford, First, 1510 E. Davis Ave.

Register at: Orientation & Credentialing | Oklahoma Baptist Disaster Relief ([okdisasterhelp.org](http://okdisasterhelp.org))

**Sept. 22**—Chaplaincy Refresher Course \$10—Bartlesville, Eastern Heights\*\*

To register, please email [pjones@oklahomabaptists.org](mailto:pjones@oklahomabaptists.org)

**Sept. 23**—Chaplaincy Refresher Course \$10—Miami, Cardin\*\*

To register, please email [pjones@oklahomabaptists.org](mailto:pjones@oklahomabaptists.org)

**Sept. 28**—Chaplaincy Refresher Course \$10—Norman, Bethel\*\*

To register, please email [pjones@oklahomabaptists.org](mailto:pjones@oklahomabaptists.org)

**Sept. 30**—Chaplaincy Refresher Course \$10—Blanchard, Middleburg\*\*

To register, please email [pjones@oklahomabaptists.org](mailto:pjones@oklahomabaptists.org)

**Oct. 7**—Chaplaincy Refresher Course \$10—Baptist Building\*\*

To register, please email [pjones@oklahomabaptists.org](mailto:pjones@oklahomabaptists.org)

**Oct. 11-13**—Chaplain Manual and Operational Stress First Aid

\$60—Baptist Building—Instructor: Naomi Paget.

To register, please email [pjones@oklahomabaptists.org](mailto:pjones@oklahomabaptists.org)

**Oct. 14**—Disaster Relief Orientation & Credentialing – 8:30 a.m.-

2:30 p.m., DR Team Center, 7180 NW Expressway, Okarche, OK

Register at: Orientation & Credentialing | Oklahoma Baptist Disaster Relief ([okdisasterhelp.org](http://okdisasterhelp.org))

**Oct. 20**—Chaplaincy Refresher Course \$10 – Wilson, Zaneis\*\*

To register, please email [pjones@oklahomabaptists.org](mailto:pjones@oklahomabaptists.org)

\*\* For endorsed chaplains only

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