



THE BAPTIST MESSENGER

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Disaster Relief
by Jason Yarbrough



Church News &
Upcoming Events
by Staff



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ON MISSION:

OKLAHOMA BAPTISTS MISSIONS CONFERENCE PROPELS GLOBAL, STUDENT MISSIONS

Written by Staff

Oklahoma Baptists and the International Mission Board (IMB) teamed up to host the Missions Conference on April 5-6 at Oklahoma City, Emmaus. The event inspired, equipped and mobilized Oklahomans of all ages to passionately embrace the Great Commission.

Todd Fisher, Oklahoma Baptists executive director-treasurer, said, "Almost 300 in attendance at our Missions Conference covering everything from short term trips for churches to career missions. So good to have so many young people there and those from churches big and small from all over the state; 120 signed up to explore long-term mission opportunities!"



In prior years, the event was exclusive to GoStudents mission trip participants. This year, it was expanded to include Oklahoma Baptists' Global Missions Ministry Partner Mike Wall and his Global Missions target audience, which resulted in the most comprehensive missions' event ever hosted by Oklahoma Baptists.

The April 5 session was designed to empower short-term mission trip leaders, providing training that will help them lead effectively. IMB mission experts were involved in the April 5 session, where church leaders gained practical instruction on leading a mission trip.

Brian Baldwin, Oklahoma Baptists' youth missions & evangelism ministry partner, said "This event, as always, served as a pivotal training for both students and adults gearing up for GoStudents trips this summer. Friday was dedicated to empowering short-term mission trip leaders, providing them with the training

to lead effectively. We were thrilled to have experts from the IMB and Oklahoma Baptists offering advice, answering questions, and instilling confidence in leaders responsible for various mission projects."

Missions Conference topics included: "Ministry and Purpose, Schedule Preparation, Logistics and Risk Management."


"There were about 100 leaders participating in the training for mission trip leaders on Friday and about 300 participants of all ages on Saturday who participated in project orientation times, breakouts and general sessions," Baldwin added. "Bryant Wright, president of Send Relief, was the main speaker and Cody Dunbar, worship leader at Yukon, Together-We, led in worship during the general sessions. Saturday was a crucial day in preparing the GoStudents mission trip participants for their upcoming trips."

The April 6 session gave guidance on how to answer God's call to be a missionary. "The Missions Conference was very inspiring to me to see the number of churches wanting to prepare and train their church

members to go on short term mission trips, as well as meeting students and adults who feel called to go overseas full time," Wall said. "It is obvious that God is at work, and I am thankful for the GoStudents Network and our Global Missions team for making this such a great success. What makes this even more fun is for us to cooperate together because we are truly better together. God continues to multiply as we mobilize Oklahomans to the nations. Send one. Take one. Be one."

If you or your church would like to learn more about global missions, vocational missions, or short-term missions, visit www.oklahomabaptists.org/missionsconference.

The 2025 Missions Conference is set for March 28-29. Baldwin encouraged Oklahoma Baptists to plan now to attend next year's event.

"This conference will help prepare and connect you with the right people. Does your church need that extra motivation to engage in missions? We guarantee they'll leave with a renewed commitment," he said. 



OKLAHOMA BAPTIST DISASTER RELIEF SPRINGS INTO ACTION

Written by Jason Yarbrough
Oklahoma Baptists'
Disaster Relief Director



Spring has arrived and Oklahoma Baptist Disaster Relief (DR) has sprung into action as fires, storms and other needs have impacted our state.

DR volunteers recently spent a couple of weeks responding to the wildfires that blazed through Ellis County in the communities of Shattuck and Gage in Western Oklahoma. Assisting 10 homeowners that had lost their homes to the fires allowed us to put our motto/mission into action: Bringing help, hope, and healing to people in crisis. One homeowner especially captured the hearts of one of our teams, and they approached me and our DR leadership about the possibility of helping him get re-established on his property.

While we don't have an ongoing rebuild ministry in our Oklahoma DR ministry, it is something that I would love to see us add in the coming years. With that in mind, we committed to help this 85-year-old gentleman by converting part of an old milk barn on his property into an apartment. He had no insurance and wanted nothing more than to be able to stay on his property. We have partnered with Pastor Jon Syverson and the Apache, First family to provide the manpower and materials for this project. We currently have a team staying at the

Northwest Baptist Assembly Camp in Vici and are working on his property to provide a place for him to live.



Disaster Relief volunteers partnered with the Oklahoma Highway Patrol (OHP) to provide meals, showers, and laundry services for almost 100 officers in Southeastern Oklahoma in response to the April 8 solar eclipse. On April 1, a group of 30-plus DR volunteers traveled to and stayed at Ilabel, First preparing meals out of the church facilities. They also managed three shower/laundry trailers in various locations where OHP officers were serving.

This group recorded 1,690 volunteer work hours, provided 297 showers, and washed and dried 109 loads of laundry, in addition to preparing around 1,200 meals. This was a great opportunity to serve our highway patrol officers as they served in a time of need in our state.

April 1 brought severe weather across the state with the worst impact being felt by the community of Barnsdall in Northeastern Oklahoma. There were several homes impacted by the tornado that swept through that area and our DR volunteers were ready to jump into action. Our Washington-Osage Association chainsaw team spent the needed time in Barnsdall to help those families whose homes had been impacted. The members of Barnsdall, First were great hosts and provided meals and snacks for the team while they were working.

Each of these responses point to the value of the relationships we have with our local churches and associations. Oklahoma Baptist DR is grateful for the prayers and financial support that allow us to serve our state and partner with our churches to help in advancing the Gospel together.



Visit okdisasterhelp.org to learn about supporting and joining this incredible Oklahoma Baptists ministry. 

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UPCOMING EVENTS

New School to Launch

BIXBY- Evergreen Academy is accepting student applications to launch its inaugural classes this fall. Jeff Keeney, head of the school, is working to achieve state accreditation as this affiliate of Bixby, Evergreen prepares to begin kindergarten through third-grade instruction in August. Evergreen Founder and Senior Pastor Michael Gabbert started Evergreen Church in 1999 with a vision of launching this academy.

You may learn more about Evergreen Academy and its online admission process at evergreen.academy or by calling 918/923-3433. 

April 17-18 | Oklahoma Baptist University (OBU)

OBU students and faculty members, as well as representatives of the Pottawatomie-Lincoln Association and leaders in the Shawnee community, will continue the tradition of a New Testament Reading Marathon. The event is open to the OBU and Shawnee community members, and participants may come and go. 

For more information about the event, go to plba.org.

April 17


Opening Ceremony | 8:30 p.m.
Geiger Center East Lawn
(Weather issues: Geiger Center Student Lounge)

April 18

Lunch Break (2 hrs)
Closing Ceremony | 6:00 p.m.

April 26 | Center for Baptist Renewal (CBR) to host conference at Oklahoma Baptist University (OBU)

SHAWNEE - Focused on "Baptist Preaching and the Minor Prophets," the conference will kick-off with the spring Hobbs Lecture delivered by Matthew Y. Emerson, OBU co-provost and dean of theology, arts and humanities. The gathering will feature worship led by hymn writer and

CBR fellow Matt Boswell, OBU visiting professor of worship studies and ministry, as well as special guests and panel discussions. 

April 26 | 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.
Cost: \$25+ (lunch & dinner option)
Register at bit.ly/CBR24.



TOM ELLIFF CENTER FOR MISSIONS

Final Mission Forum for the '23-'24 school year!

Glenn and Rhonda Stewart

- Eight years IMB missionaries to South Asia, where they served as Cluster Leaders of five IMB teams working in five Indian states with over 173 million people.
- Discipled local believers to use a micro SD card in their mobile phone as a strategic tool for evangelism, discipleship, church formation and leadership development.
- In 2022 the IMB conducted a formal assessment of this work. The assessment determined 80% of local believers were engaged in generational disciple-making.
- To date, the tracking of this movement has confirmed more than 97,000 new house churches and more than 350,000 new baptized believers.
- Stewart partners with state conventions, associations and local churches to share about effective strategies for reaching foreign-born peoples residing in their communities.

May 2

3:30 - 5 p.m.

Bailey Business Center

TENT RECEPTION FOLLOWING



TOM ELLIFF CENTER FOR MISSIONS

From the Church, through OBU, to the World

Take the **2024 SBC Church**
COMPENSATION
SURVEY

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Cooperation with
Baptist State Conventions

HIGHLIGHTS

Quick

Survey takes less than 10 minutes to complete

Confidential

Specific survey data will not be shared with other organizations

Helpful

Results help churches like yours structure competitive compensation packages for various positions

Timely

Survey ends on June 30, 2024

View 2022 Survey Results: compstudy.lifeway.com/



[GuideStone.org/CompensationSurvey](https://www.guidestone.org/CompensationSurvey)

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