



THE BAPTIST MESSENGER

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2024 Oklahoma Pastors' Conference Preview

by Luke Holmes



Oklahoma Baptists' Board Meets at Falls Creek

by Messenger Staff



Church News

by Messenger Staff



DONATING FURNITURE TO THOSE IN NEED

by Jacob King

Most of our day-to-day lives are busy, but at the end of a busy day we can always count on our beds being there to give us a place to lay our heads for some needed rest. Some families in Oklahoma do not have that luxury.

This is where bed ministries, like the one set up at Bethel, New Hope, come in, providing families in need with a place to comfortably rest their heads.

In 2022, Bethel, New Hope went on a mission trip to La Feria, Texas where they worked with a church ministry called Heart 4 Kids which plants churches and provides for the needs of churches and families in Southern Texas.

While in Texas, New Hope assisted in constructing beds for children in need -- the spark that would ignite and motivate the church to do more.

"That was our initial introduction into the building beds ministry," said Judy Sherrin, ReNewHope Bed Ministry point person. "We said, 'We'd like to do that,' and we went back in January of 2023 to have (Heart 4 Kids) teach us the operation. We came back on fire and were ready for this to happen."

ReNewHope's belief is that every child should have a bed in which to sleep. While they primarily serve Pottawatomie County, ReNewHope has also served families in Lincoln County, Oklahoma City and Norman, if the need is dire.

ReNewHope is connected to families through 111 Project, which exists to connect churches to families in need, and has been serving families since early last year.

"New Hope has been a friend of ours," said 111 Project Executive Director Chris Campbell. "We can't be more joyed to hear that they've taken off."

In August 2023, New Hope invited Oklahoma Baptist University (OBU) students to come help build beds on service days. Seeing the need for beds, OBU offered to donate beds, dressers and other furniture to New Hope, an offer that was gladly accepted.

"After the (April 19, 2023) tornado, we lost all of our storage space, so in May, we started giving to non-profits," said Shannon Hester, OBU Controller.

So far, OBU has donated drawers, dressers, beds, mattresses and more to ReNewHope. This partnership between OBU and ReNewHope has been ongoing behind the scenes since May 10, and in that time they have helped 40 families' needs while building relationships at the same time.

"It's brought a lot of joy for me," said Hester. "It's been exciting to go and help these families and help these organizations help the families. There are families that have nothing and even though they may not know this furniture came from OBU, it's helping them and we're building community that way."

Every delivery made by ReNewHope is special. It gives the families served two kinds of comfort: a soft bed to sleep on at night and the comfort of knowing that they have people looking out for them.

Sherrin recalled the very first delivery made by ReNewHope was to three kids who had been re-homed to their grandparents' house. While New Hope set up the beds, the kids were right in the middle of the action, fascinated by their very first beds. ReNewHope also provided bed sheets and quilts to go over the beds, and when they brought the quilts in the kids grabbed them and held on tight.

"We couldn't put them on the bed because they wouldn't let go of them," Sherrin said. "The oldest boy said, 'This is the first bed we've ever had; we've never had a bed before,' and I said, 'Well this is your bed now and you get to keep it.'"

"Every delivery has something special. People are touched by the generosity, but this is God's gift and we tell them that," said Sherrin.

ReNewHope's mission is ongoing and they are working with 111 Project, OBU and others to help provide for these families. For more information or to contact ReNewHope, visit www.newhopebethel.com/missions/.



2024 OKLAHOMA PASTORS' CONFERENCE PREVIEW

by Luke Holmes

The Oklahoma Baptist Pastors' Conference (OKBPC) serves as a much-needed time of renewal, connection and inspiration for those who lead churches across the state.

The 2024 conference, set for Mon., Nov. 11 at Moore, First, has the goal of encouraging pastors to stay strong in ministry with the theme of "Well Done," drawn from the words of Jesus in Matthew 25:23: *"His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'"*

This year's Pastors Conference will highlight the concept of faithfulness into five key areas: family, preaching, leadership, longevity in ministry and personal life. These themes will be explored in depth through sermons, testimonies and focused times of reflection and prayer.

This year's conference brings together respected voices from within Baptist life. Mark Clifton, known for his passion for church revitalization and replanting and heart for small church pastors, will bring a wealth of experience to the conversation on leadership and longevity in ministry. Clifton's love for pastors and churches in decline will resonate with many who are facing challenges in their congregations.

Jared Wilson, a leading author and advocate for Gospel-driven ministry, will also take the stage. Wilson's works, such as *The Prodigal Church* and *Gospel Wakefulness*, have challenged many pastors to keep Christ at the center of their preaching and ministry.

His session on the personal life of the pastor will be a great encouragement for weary pastors serving faithfully in the trenches. Along with these national figures, Oklahoma Baptist will be encouraged through stories of God working in the lives of pastors through testimonies and messages rooted in God's Word.

The OKBPC will also have time for pastors to worship together, pray for one another, and enjoy fellowship with those who share their calling. Times of worship will be interspersed throughout the day led by Dustin Searles

from First Durant. Guided prayer sessions in the Psalms will give attendees the chance to intercede for one another, their churches, and their communities.

Oklahoma Baptists sharing at the conference include Rob Lindley, Brayden Buss, Jace Hargrove, Jake Adams and Keith Wigington. Each of these men will challenge and encourage Oklahoma Baptists to be strong and stay the course in their areas of focus.

In the middle of the day, lunch will be sponsored by Send Network Oklahoma, where pastors can break bread together, connect with old friends, and form new relationships. They will highlight the work of Send Network in OK, and Clifton will again speak to those at the lunch.

There will also be a separate time for the pastors' wives during lunch featuring Tara Matlock and free lunch hosted by Sara Holmes and sponsored by Moore, First. They will have a panel discussion with a special door prize and other surprises.

New to this year's conference is the presentation of the JB Rounds Award, which will honor a bi-vocational pastor who has demonstrated exceptional faithfulness in their ministry. Named in honor of JB Rounds, one of the founders of Falls Creek and leader of Oklahoma Baptists, this award is meant to highlight the importance of recognizing those who labor in smaller or underserved churches while also maintaining other careers.

The goal of this award is to highlight a pastor who has devoted his life to bi-vocational ministry and earned the "well done" as a good and faithful servant.

The 2024 OKPBC team of Luke Holmes, Jeremy Freeman and Landon Warren have worked hard to ensure that pastors who attend will leave equipped to hear those cherished words, "Well done, good and faithful servant," not only in eternity but throughout their ongoing ministry. Led by pastors, and created for pastors, the OKBPC promises to be a time of refreshing, renewal and encouragement for all who attend.



OKLAHOMA BAPTISTS BOARD MEETS AT FALLS CREEK

by Messenger Staff

DAVIS—Members of Oklahoma Baptists Board of Directors met on September 10 at Falls Creek Conference Center for their regularly scheduled board meeting. The board meeting featured times of business, ministry reports, prayer, fellowship and more.

Todd Fisher, Oklahoma Baptists Executive Director-Treasurer joined the meeting by video teleconference during the afternoon plenary session. He gave members a positive report of his health recovery since his severe automobile accident in late July.



"As I know you are aware, I was in a very bad car wreck on July 28 while I was traveling to speak at Indian Falls Creek. The wreck severely broke both of my ankles and I had compound fractures on the left side of my pelvis and upper left arm that included radial nerve damage down to my hand. I also fractured nine ribs and one vertebra. As you can imagine, my body is slowly recovering from the trauma of the wreck. I was in the hospital for 32 days and had five surgeries. However, I have much for which to be thankful to the Lord not the least of which that He spared my life," he said.

Fisher went on to thank the Oklahoma Baptists board and the staff for carrying on the ministry work while he is recovering, and he expressed his profound thanks for their support and prayer.

"I am incredibly grateful to you for the many prayers, messages, and acts of kindness for me and my family. We are absolutely overwhelmed and humbled at the outpouring of love from our Oklahoma Baptists family," he said.

Presentations were made by board members, including Oklahoma Baptists' President Michael Butler, who serves as pastor at Chickasha, First.

"I want to express thanks to (Oklahoma Baptists Senior Associate Director) Joe Ligon for stepping up to lead so well while Dr. Fisher was out, and to the entire staff," Butler said.

Ligon shared various updates and how Oklahoma Baptists have continued the ministry priorities, even in Fisher's absence.

Ligon also shared an update on the renovation of the new Sonic Building, which is owned by WatersEdge and will become the new offices for the staff of WatersEdge, Oklahoma Baptists, Oklahoma Baptist Homes for Children (OBHC) and Baptist Village Communities (BVC). It is expected that the move to the new Sonic building near downtown Oklahoma City will occur this calendar year.

Ministry reports were given from the leaders of the four Oklahoma Baptists' Affiliates: James Swain, president of OBHC; Robert Kellogg, CEO of WatersEdge; Heath Thomas, president of Oklahoma Baptist University; and Bill Pierce, president of BVC. Board Members heard financial report from Oklahoma Baptists Chief Financial Officer Leslie Osborn. In board action, members approved the 2025 financial plan, as well as affirmed strategic ministry objectives.

On Nov. 11-12, the Annual Meeting of Oklahoma Baptists is set to take place at Moore, First. The next regularly scheduled board meeting is set for Feb. 25, 2025 in Oklahoma City.

THE SPRING

HOW CHURCHES CAN HELP TRAFFICKING VICTIMS

by Bob Green

Did you know that Oklahoma is ranked first in the nation in instances of domestic violence? It also ranks second nationally in instances of femicide – situations when males kill their female partners.

God's church simply cannot bury our heads in the sand, ignoring these realities in our communities. As Oklahoma Baptists, we can and should be resources of healing for survivors in these situations which are designed to destroy and wound those victimized by Satan's power and presence.

Oklahoma Baptists are no strangers to these realities. In 1980, the Tulsa Metro Baptist Association began a ministry to shelter abused women and children in an old downtown Tulsa church.

A few years later, this ministry was able to purchase facilities better able to meet the needs of their guests, and in 2012, the ministry expanded to serve individuals caught in human trafficking. Today, this shelter is the only faith-based shelter in Oklahoma certified by the state Attorney General's office.

In the beginning, the shelter was named DaySpring Villa and guided by an associational committee. Years later, it was released to form its own nonprofit board governing its future development.

Today, the shelter exists as The Spring – providing advocacy, a safe escape, and ongoing Christlike care for those who have experienced domestic violence, sexual violence, and stalking.

Human trafficking clients stay an average of 49 days, while domestic violence clients stay an average of 98 days. This is an increase in the length of stay from past years, indicating that more guests are engaging in programming long term, allowing them to truly transform their lives once they leave The Spring and not return to their previous circumstances.

There is only one question: how can we be more involved in the ministry of The Spring? Here are a few suggestions for your church to consider:

- Educate your congregation as to the necessity of this ministry. The Spring conducts training regularly and would be more than happy to partner with your church.
- Consider a church partnership and financial support. You can find details for both of these processes on their website – www.thespringok.org.
- Invite your congregation to join the Spring as Prayer Partners and volunteers.
- Work with The Spring to equip your staff in wisely handling individuals who need this ministry in your church and community.

God is moving in the lives of survivors! Pray for and partner with The Spring to make an eternal difference in the lives of these individuals. Jeremiah 33:3.

Visit thespringok.org/church-partnerships to learn more.

Bob Green is pastor emeritus of Broken Arrow, Arrow Heights.

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VILLAGE MANAGER

Seeking a motivated, mission-driven person to lead Baptist Village of Cleveland

Skills and Qualifications desired...

- Excellent communication
- Organizational skills
- Community outreach
- Mission motivated

CHURCH NEWS



DISASTER RELIEF RESPOND TO HURRICANE FRANCINE

In the aftermath of Hurricane Francine, Oklahoma Baptist Disaster Relief (DR) volunteers are serving storm victims in numerous ways. According to daily reports, 226 work orders have been received with 41 already completed. There have been two professions of faith, 16 Gospel presentations, 198 ministry contacts and 20 Bibles presented. For more information, or to make a tax-deductible donation to

NEW CONGREGATIONS/ AFFILIATES

Tulsa, Greater New Grove

(New Congregation)

Pastor: Johnnie R Jones Sr.

14147E 12th St., Tulsa, OK 74108

Tulsa Metro Association

Stillwater, Mehan Union

(New Affiliate)

Pastor: Toby Tiner

8300 E 68th, Stillwater, OK 74074

Cimmaron Association

Oklahoma City, Providence

(New Congregation)

Pastor: Brett Middleton

2233 W I-44 Service Rd., Oklahoma City, OK 73112

Metro Baptist Network

NORMAN, CORNERSTONE 35TH ANNIVERSARY

Norman, Cornerstone, 17020 E. Tecumseh Rd., will celebrate its 35th Anniversary on Oct. 30. This will be a day of fellowship and worship, featuring guest speaker Preston Collins, Union Association Director of Missions. The anniversary celebration will begin with a Bible study at 10:30 a.m., followed by an 11 a.m. worship service. A BBQ lunch will be served at noon. The day will conclude with outdoor gospel singing at 4 p.m.

VOLUNTEER MISSIONS OPPORTUNITIES

Tulakogee Conference Center

Wagoner, OK | 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, OK | 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.

Tulsa, OK | 918-794-0088

hhtulsa.org

Hospitality House of Oklahoma

Provides for the physical and spiritual needs of families with loved ones incarcerated in McAlester.

Lodging available.

918-429-0142

Oklahoma Jail & Prison Ministries

Needs volunteers to go to the jails and share the Gospel each week.

405-917-2242 | ojpm@ojpm.org

MASTER'S VOICE CONCERT OKLA. CITY, SOUTH LINDSAY

Oklahoma City, South Lindsay invites guests to hear Gospel vocal group Master's Voice live on Dec. 15 at 10:00 a.m. Since 1995, Master's Voice has been committed to bringing an evangelistic approach to singing and preaching the life-changing gospel of Jesus Christ. More information to come.

UPCOMING DR EVENTS/ INFORMATION

Assisting Individuals in Crisis (CISM)*

Oct. 24-25 | 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. | Cost \$50.

Tulsa, South Tulsa

To register, email

pjones@oklahomabaptists.org.

(Continuing education for those who have completed Chaplain Manual and OSFA)

Orientation/Credentialing*

Oct. 25-26

Grand Lake Assembly, Grove

Register online okdisasterhelp.org

1st Annual Oklahoma DR Roundtable

November 16 | 7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Oklahoma Baptist University

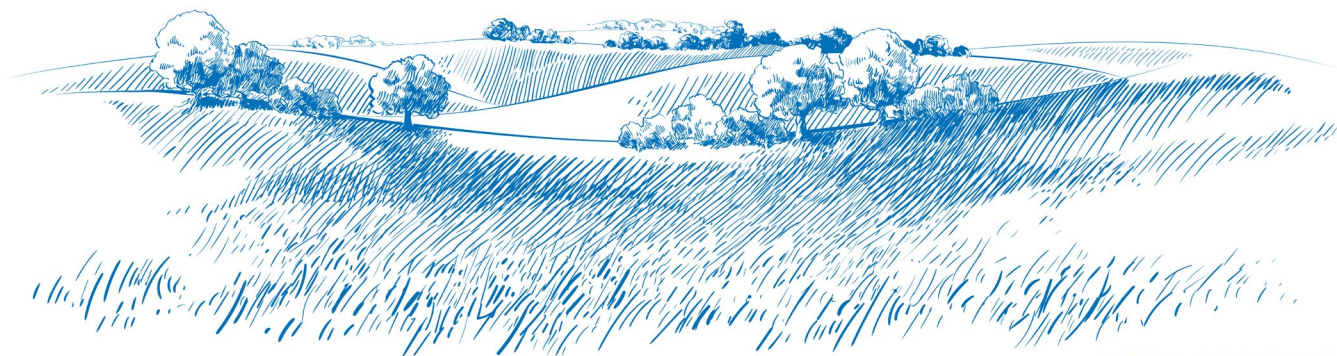
Register at www.okdisasterhelp.org

**For endorsed chaplains only*



Blessed to Give

'IT IS MORE BLESSED TO GIVE THAN TO RECEIVE.'



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Offering**