



THE BAPTIST MESSENGER

DIGITAL EDITION | JAN. 22, 2025

ROSE DAY

SAVE THE DATE
February 5, 2025
Oklahoma State Capitol



Keynote Speaker:

**Rebecca
Kiessling**

Pro-Life Speaker, Attorney



**Longtime State Pastor
Wiginton Dies**

by Bob Nigh



**OBU to Host Annual
Student Apologetics
Conference**

by Bryan Painter



Church News

2025 ROSE DAY INSIDE CAPITOL ON FEB. 5 TO RALLY FOR LIFE

by Jacob King

On Wednesday, Feb. 5, the annual Rose Day Pro-Life Indoor Rally will be held inside the Oklahoma State Capitol. This event is the most longstanding faith-based, pro-life event in Oklahoma. Each year, hundreds gather at the Capitol at the beginning of the new legislative session to promote and support the lives of unborn babies. Attendees are encouraged to meet with their state senators and representatives and present them with red roses, which represent the sanctity of human life and the unborn.

This year's keynote speaker is Rebecca Kiessling, a pro-life speaker and attorney who was conceived in rape. She has been an international pro-life speaker and adoption speaker since 1995, speaking for various pro-life organizations including right to life groups, crisis pregnancy center fundraisers, 40 Days for Life events, rallies, churches, high schools, universities, Student for Life, women's conferences, attorney conferences, adoption events and more throughout North America, Europe and Latin America.

Kiessling is also politically influential, as she changed the heart of then-Texas Gov. Rick Perry during his presidential campaign, as well as Newt Gingrich and many legislators across the U.S., Canada, Europe and Latin America. She's inspired victims all around the world to choose life for their children. Kiessling has been able to accomplish all this while being an attorney and mother of five children.



Registration begins at 9 a.m. in the second-floor rotunda of the Oklahoma State Capitol. Rose distribution, the time at which attendees present the red roses they bring to their respective elective officials, will begin at 9:30 a.m. The indoor rally will begin at 11:15 a.m. inside the Oklahoma State House Chamber, with a brief pre-rally choir concert.

Light Christian Academy Choir, directed by Kerry Andrews, will lead the music. Following this, various speakers will take the podium to share their personal stories of fighting for the rights of the unborn. House Representatives and State Senators will be recognized. Mandi Parkhurst, will also speak at the podium, presenting her testimony of how her life was changed by the loving forgiveness of God.



Rose Day began in the early 1990s as a way for Oklahomans to share their concerns about abortion with elected officials at the beginning of a new legislative session. It was initially started by members of the Oklahoma Catholic community, but Southern Baptists and individuals representing a variety of Christian denominations have participated in the event each year.

For more information about the upcoming Rose Day and to view videos from past Rose Day rallies, visit roseday.life or scan the QR code below.



LONGTIME STATE PASTOR WIGINTON DIES

by Bob Nigh

Longtime state pastor Keith Edwin Wiginton, Sr. died Dec. 27, 2024, only three days before his 89th birthday. Pastor of Altus, First from 1971-2001, Wiginton's first pastorate was at Mt. Tepee Church near Hobart (1958-61). He also served as pastor at Martha, First and Edmond, Highland Park in Oklahoma and Carlsbad, N.M., Blodgett St.

Wiginton excelled in the classroom at Friendship School in Jackson County. He was the valedictorian of his graduating senior class in 1954. Also an accomplished athlete, he starred on the baseball and basketball teams and was a member of the 1951 and 1952 state champion Altus American Legion baseball team. He attended Southwestern Oklahoma State College (SWOSC) where he was a starter all four years on conference-winning basketball and baseball teams. He was voted class president three years, served on the Student Senate, and was selected "Best Citizen" in 1958.

After accepting Christ as Lord and Savior at a revival service at Weatherford, First during his senior year at SWOSC, he surrendered to the gospel ministry. Soon after, he met Linda June Graybill at the Baptist Student Union, and they married on June 12, 1960.

Wiginton earned Bachelor of Divinity (1963) and Master of Divinity (1973) degrees from Southwestern Seminary, and the family to move to Carlsbad, N.M. in 1964. They returned to Oklahoma in 1967, when he was called to be the first pastor of Edmond, Highland Park, and, in 1971, Wiginton became pastor of Altus, First.

During the next 30 years, a new sanctuary was constructed, parking was expanded, buses were sent out in the town to bring people to church, and radio and cable broadcasts ministries were begun. Wiginton was a frequent preacher at Fellowship of Christian Athletes conferences, Falls Creek, Glorieta, Ridgecrest, and in numerous revivals. At Altus, he baptized 5,500 new Christians, an average of 170 baptisms a year. In the last 20 years, the average was 203 baptisms a year, with more than 300 baptisms a year for four of those years.

Wiginton was named pastor of the year by the Oklahoma Fellowship of Christian Athletes in 1977, and served as president of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma in 1981-82 and on the board of trustees for Oklahoma Baptist University. He received the Lifetime Achievement in Evangelism award in 2009 at the Oklahoma State Evangelism Conference.

After retirement, the Wigintons moved near Lake Humphrey between Duncan and Marlow, before moving to Claremore, and joining Claremore, First, where their son, Keith II, was pastor.



Altus, First celebrated the 25th anniversary of Pastor Keith Wiginton's ministry in 1996. He is pictured here with his wife, Linda.





OBU TO HOST ANNUAL STUDENT APOLOGETICS CONFERENCE MARCH 1

by Bryan Painter

Registration is underway for Oklahoma Baptist University's annual youth apologetics conference, Generation Why. Students, youth groups, college ministry groups and others around the state and region are invited to attend the conference on March 1, 2025. The event will take place on the OBU campus in Shawnee.

Last year's conference, "Biblical Apologetics," included about 900 attendees. This year's conference focuses on "Apologetics and Evangelism."

Generation Why, also known as GenWhy, enlightens and equips students to recognize the importance of reasonable faith in a post-Christian age.

For most of the 20th century, people identified themselves according to their faith. But then everything changed. This conference looks at what it means to be a Christian in the post-Christian age.

The conference is designed for middle school, high school and college students to prepare them to recognize and know their faith more deeply and to defend it more effectively.

Students will learn about the rational foundations that show how the Christian faith is true while gaining practical tools to tell others about that truth.

GenWhy will begin at 9 a.m. and conclude at 4 p.m. The day will include a time of worship and an array of breakout sessions.

The registration cost is \$10 per person, \$60 per group for groups with six to 14 people, and \$70 per group for groups of 15 or more. Groups registered after February 1 must register at the individual rate.

Featured speakers are Paul Gould, professor of philosophy of religion at Palm Beach Atlantic University, and Mary Jo Sharp, author, founder and director of Confident Christianity Apologetics Ministry.

Gould is the founder and president of the Two Tasks Institute and a past (2019-2020) Visiting Fellow at the Henry Center for Theological Understanding at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. He has a master's in philosophy of religion and ethics from Talbot School of Theology and a Ph.D. in philosophy from Purdue University.

Sharp, a former atheist who now follows Jesus, has navigated two distinct American cultures: the post-Christian ethos of the Pacific Northwest and the evangelical landscape of the Bible Belt. Her introduction to apologetics came during her personal quest for answers. Sharp is the founder and director of Confident Christianity Apologetics Ministry. She previously taught apologetics at Houston Christian University, where she was instrumental in establishing their apologetics program.

The Generation Why 2025 conference is facilitated through OBU's Hobbs School of Theology and Ministry. Registration for the conference can be found at <https://www.okbu.edu/events/generation-why/index.html>. For questions, please contact amber.meek@okbu.edu.



CHURCH NEWS

UPCOMING EVENTS

DR Orientation and Credentialing

Feb. 22 Morris, Trinity
830 W. Ozark St.
Morris, OK
74445

Mar. 29/April 11-12 - Locations TBD
Register online - okdisasterhelp.org

Chaplain Manual/OSFA Training

March 6-8
300 Johnny Bench Dr., Ste. 300,
Oklahoma City, OK 73104
Instructor: Naomi Paget
Cost is \$60
Register [here!](#)

CISM Training

April 3-4
300 Johnny Bench Dr., Ste. 300,
Oklahoma City, OK 73104
Instructor: Greg Giltner
Cost is \$50
Register [here!](#)

OKC, Crosstown New Building Event

Sunday, March 9, 5:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
2433 NW 30 St., Oklahoma City
Former members and friends of Oklahoma City,
Baptist Temple are invited to a special ceremony and
dinner commemorating the transfer of ownership of
the facility to OKC, Crosstown.
RSVP by calling 405-445-4523 or email
info@crosstownokc.org

UNITED WEEKEND

From Jan. 24 - 25, Oklahoma City, Eagle Heights (EHC) will host United Weekend. This is an event where middle and high school students from churches in South OKC and Moore come together for a weekend filled with worship, fun and being challenged to go further in their walk with Christ. Services will be held at EHC; students will stay in Host Homes, provided by members of their respective churches, on Fri. and Sat. nights. Cost to attend is \$80 and balance, along with release form, is due today, so act fast!

[Click here to register through EHC](#) or check with other participating churches for more info.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma, OKC & Community Food bank of Easter OK, Tulsa

Both locations - Call 405-972-1111
Not a Baptist ministry, but many BGCO churches receive food from them for local pantries.

Arms Around Broken Arrow

Food pantry and clothes closet
918-258-7714 or email bryan@armsaroundba.org

Lake Texoma Baptist Resort Minsitry

Directors - Montry & Tammy Wood
2034 Max Rd., Mead, Oklahoma, 73449
580-916-2181 or email thehelm2034@gmail.com

Cherokee Baptist Assembly

Cherokee, OK
918-506-5485 or email
cba_tahlequah@yahoo.com

Campers on Mission

If you are intersted in helping with church building projects, sewing and evangelizing, please contact Paul Day at 405-509-0396 or email paul.l.day@att.net

Camp Gibson

Hardesty, OK
Contact - Tom freeman
580-338-6259 or email pbaok221@gmail.com

Families Feeding Families Meal Center

Durant, OK
580-230-9142 or email familiesfeedingfamilies.org

OKLAHOMA BAPTISTS THE PRIORITY OF PREACHING CONFERENCE

THE PATHWAY OF PROGRESS

REGISTER NOW!
February 3, 2025 | Quail Springs Baptist Church, OKC | \$40
oklahomabaptists.org/pop