



THE BAPTIST MESSENGER

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Hundreds Attend 'Open House' Event at New Ministry Offices for Oklahoma Baptists, Affiliates



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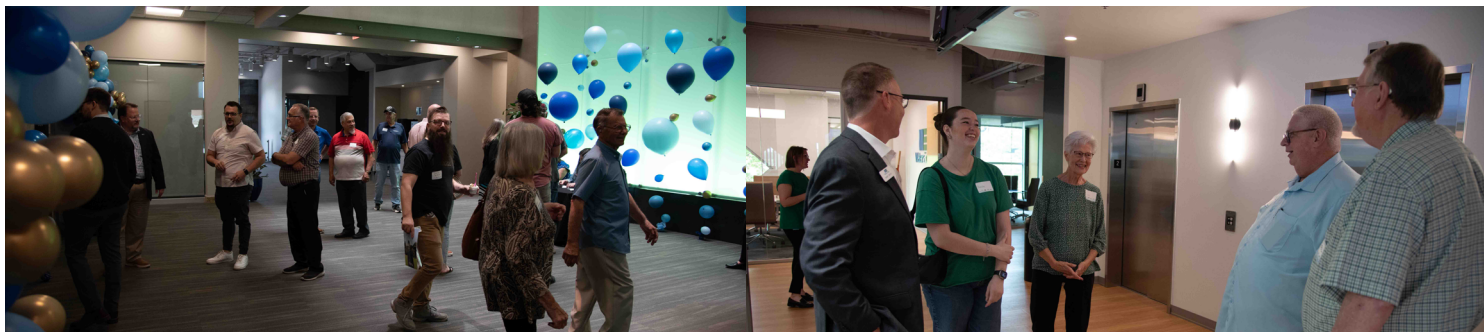
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HUNDREDS ATTEND 'OPEN HOUSE' EVENT AT NEW MINISTRY OFFICES FOR OKLAHOMA BAPTISTS, AFFILIATES

by Jacob King

On May 15, hundreds of Oklahoma Baptists attended an Open House event at the new ministry offices of Oklahoma Baptists, WatersEdge and other Affiliates located in downtown Oklahoma City in Bricktown.

Pastors, church staff and others from across the state traveled in for the Open House, taking a tour of the new building and hearing more about the Gospel-focused ministries.

Todd Fisher, Oklahoma Baptists Executive-Director, said, "We had a great crowd at our open house for the new offices of Oklahoma Baptists, WatersEdge, Oklahoma Baptist Homes for Children and Baptist Village Communities. God has blessed us with this new location to continue our investment into kingdom ministry. Thanks to everyone who drove from near and far to be here. What a joy it is to serve Oklahoma Baptists!"

Earlier in the year, Oklahoma Baptists, WatersEdge and the other Affiliates began to occupy the newly renovated office building.

The Open House tour showcased the various Gospel ministries that serve and support churches across the state. Guests were able to tour all floors of the office building. The fourth floor serves as the office space for Oklahoma Baptist Homes for Children and Baptist Village Communities. The third floor is where Oklahoma Baptists state convention staff are located, and the second floor serves as offices for WatersEdge.

The office location is at 300 Johnny Bench Drive and was formerly the corporate headquarters for Sonic Drive-In.



SHOWING 'HEART': PASTOR'S CHILDHOOD HEALTH JOURNEY REFLECTS GOD'S FAITHFULNESS

by Kaelin Clay

From the start, Bradley O'Dell's life was nothing ordinary.

"When I was 8 days old, I underwent open heart surgery," said O'Dell. "It was just a miracle from God. Lots of prayer."

The year was 1982. But for Lynette O'Dell, seeing her son on the brink of death meant the noise of culture was drowned out by prayer. O'Dell claims the prayers of his family and friends led to miracles too undeniable to ignore.

"They knew right away something was... off with me," he said. "They didn't really know exactly what it was, but I wasn't what you would call a healthy baby. So, the doctors began to do a barrage of tests and within a week, they realized there was something going on with my heart."

Top cardiologists in the state of Arkansas found the aorta was too narrow for the blood to flow and two holes in the left ventricle essentially meant that O'Dell was born with half a heart. Open heart surgery on a fragile 8-day old child and implanting a pig valve to replace the aorta left O'Dell's parents questioning if they would ever watch their son surpass a week of life.

"And they, of course, asked, 'What are his chances?' said O'Dell. "The doctors said, 'We really can't give odds of success, but this is the only option. We can try this surgery, or he's going to die.'"

But God.

"So, they tried it, and I lived for two years," said O'Dell. "Then I started having issues again. I slept a lot. What ended up being my heart went into failure."

His chest, which already was so scarred was opened again to replace the valve which lasted O'Dell until he began high school.

"They did a couple of tests and said it was time replace that valve," he said. "They had to go through both my back and my front to replace the valve. So, I have this massive scar on my back around my left shoulder. And again, we were good. I recovered from that."

If you're keeping count, that's three open heart surgeries by the age of 15. And at age 28, he received a defibrillator.

"Because of that, I had a high risk for ventricular tachycardia," O'Dell said. "In 2010, doctors inserted the pacemaker. It's an ICD (implantable cardiac device)."

A replacement of that pacemaker in 2018 led to O'Dell's life being saved just a year later in 2019.

"I was driving home from Oklahoma City back to my home in Valliant and about an hour and a half from home, I started feeling funny," said O'Dell. "I just kept driving, and it just kept getting worse. Before I made it home, I blacked out and my defibrillator went off. It was almost like getting in a wreck. I woke up, and I was still driving down the road."

O'Dell's heart had stopped, requiring the help of his fresh defibrillator to shock his heart back to life. Physically, it stopped beating, but spiritually, it has never stopped beating for the Lord since he was six years old.

"And I remember that my mom would read a Precious Moments Bible story book to my sister and me several times a week," said O'Dell. "And, one night as she read one of those stories, I just fell under conviction."

At six years old, O'Dell was more aware of life and death than the average child because he was so close to touching death.

"And I remember my mother leading me through praying to receive Jesus," said O'Dell. "I still remember that feeling of peace I got. It was as if the Spirit—well the Spirit did come on me as the Bible tells us—and and I just felt that."

Right after high school, O'Dell surrendered his life to the ministry. Today, he is pastor of Valliant, Trinity.

"I feel like, because of all that I've been through in regard to my health, it is a benefit to minister to other people, because in a lot of ways, I literally know what they're going through," he said.

If there's any one message that embodies O'Dell's ministry, it's submission. James 4:7 says, "Submit to God, therefore resist the devil and he will flee from you." And in peaceful submission, O'Dell, knowing that his days may be numbered, chooses to surrender what little bit of a heart he has to God.

"You know as I get older—I'll turn 43 this year—I realize that I shouldn't have lived past 8 days," said O'Dell. "And that becomes more and more real the older I get. I'm literally living by the grace of God and a miracle that he performed all those years ago. I really try to remind myself to take all of these moments with my kids, with my wife, with my family serious."

Therefore, O'Dell is going and making disciples of all nations.

OKC MISSIONS CENTERS OBSERVE ANNIVERSARIES

by Bob Nigh

On May 4, officials with Metro Baptist Network, Oklahoma City (MBNOKC), celebrated the 75th Anniversary of Grace Rescue Mission and the 100th Anniversary of the Baptist Mission Center. The centers, located at 2125 and 2205 Exchange Ave., are supported by approximately 160 Southern Baptist churches in the metro area.

“Celebrating 100 years for Baptist Mission Center and 75 years for Grace Rescue Mission is a wonderful testimony to God’s faithfulness through His local churches,” said Mark Walters, MBNOKC associational mission strategist and executive director.

Walters pointed out that Grace Rescue Mission began with \$50 borrowed by a local church pastor in 1950.

“It was birthed out of the heart of a local pastor, but it has taken a cooperative effort by churches to meet the difficult needs of people in the heart of OKC for all these years.”

Scott Allen, director of community ministries for the missions’ centers for the past 21 years, was the emcee for the anniversary celebration, which was attended by about 75 people.

“Through the years, both missions have had faithful men and women in leadership who always kept their focus on meeting the basic needs of others, caring for them, and sharing Jesus as often as the opportunity presented itself. Though both missions and the services they provide may look different today from when they first opened, that focus has never changed.”

During the brief celebration, Allen recognized those current and past volunteers present who have worked at the missions centers. As the event ended, he encouraged those in attendance to participate in a “Hands Up” project by dipping the palms of their hands in paint and leave their handprint on a wall of the center.



Grace Rescue Mission, located at 2205 Exchange Ave.



Volunteers were asked to dip their palms in paint and leave their handprints on the Mission wall as part of the “Hands Up” Project.



Scott Allen emcees the anniversary celebrations for Grace Rescue Mission and Baptist Mission Center.



Baptist Mission Center, located at 2125 Exchange Ave.

CHURCH NEWS

BOB LOWERY, "A WONDERFUL SERVANT OF THE LORD"

Since joining the church in 1963, Bob Lowery has served in a multitude of roles in both the church and Tulsa community. At Tulsa, Trinity, he has served as both a deacon and a Sunday School teacher, even teaching Tulsa, Trinity's current pastor Rod Harris who said that Lowery is a "wonderful servant of the Lord." This July, Lowery will celebrate his 91st birthday. Age hasn't stopped him though, Lowery still serves through teaching youth Sunday School at Tulsa, Trinity as well as serving at Roberston Elementary's Good News Club.

UPCOMING EVENTS/INFORMATION

MinistrySafe Lunch & Learn for Pastors

Join MinistrySafe founders Gregory Love and Kimberlee Norris as they explain how to develop an effective background checking strategy for your ministry. The event will take place in conjunction with the SBC meeting on June 10 from 12 p.m. to 1p.m. in Dallas, TX at the Omni Hotel. [Learn more or register here.](#)

Indian Falls Creek Benefit Golf Tournament

On Friday, June 6, Indian Falls Creek (IFC) will host the annual IFC Benefit Golf Tournament. The cost is \$100 for individuals and \$200 for a two man team. To register, text or email the team members names to Victor Cope ndnrev@aol.com or 405-388-1568. It will be held at 1901 Gordon Cooper Dr., Shawnee. For more information, [click here.](#)

DR Orientation/Credentialing – May 29

Zoom Training

Register online at okdisasterhelp.org

DR Orientation/Credentialing – August 23

Location TBD

Register online at okdisasterhelp.org

Chaplain Manual/OSFA Training – September 4-6

Naomi Paget, Instructor – Cost \$60.00

South Tulsa Baptist Church

10310 S Sheridan Rd, Tulsa, OK 74133

To register, please email

pjones@oklahomabaptists.org

DR Orientation/Credentialing – September 20

Location TBD

Register online at okdisasterhelp.org

CISM Training - October 2-3

Greg Giltner, Instructor – Cost \$50.00

South Tulsa Baptist Church

10310 S Sheridan Rd, Tulsa, OK 74133

To register, please email

pjones@oklahomabaptists.org



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Baptist Home for Girls



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