



THE BAPTIST MESSENGER

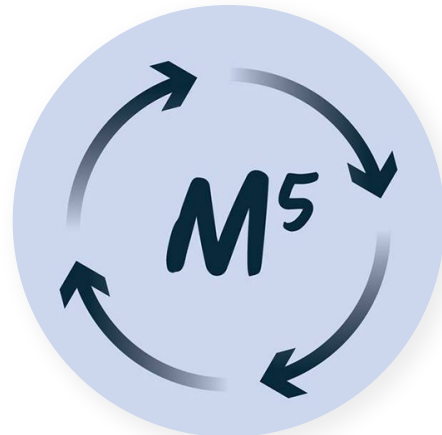
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HUNDREDS OF PRO-LIFE SUPPORTERS ATTEND ANNUAL ROSE DAY AT STATE CAPITOL



Oklahoma Baptists' Board of Directors Focus on Gospel Impact During Meeting at The Vine

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HUNDREDS OF PRO-LIFE SUPPORTERS ATTEND ANNUAL ROSE DAY AT STATE CAPITOL

by Messenger Staff

Since it began in the early 1990s, Rose Day has been an impactful way for Oklahomans to stand for life and protect the unborn from legalized abortion. The tradition continued this year on Wed., Feb. 4, when hundreds of pro-life Oklahomans gathered to celebrate the lives of the unborn and urge their legislators to protect life.

The day began with participants distributing red roses to their elected officials. This gave attendees the opportunity to speak directly with their elected officials and encourage them to enact policies that protect the unborn. Participants then filled the House Chamber to participate in the Rose Day indoor Rally for Life.

After a brief concert performed by the Oklahoma Baptist Children's Chorus, Oklahoma State Treasurer Todd Russ welcomed the crowd to the event.

"I want to say thank you for taking the time to be here today at the Capitol for the annual Rose Day Pro-Life Rally where we stand for life," Russ said.

He explained the importance of Rose Day and those who attend it, saying that those who are fighting for the lives of the unborn are like gladiators going out and pushing back the darkness.

"Hundreds of lives have been saved because of your efforts and the efforts of the Oklahoma Legislature," Russ said. "Each year on Rose Day, I see the passion, the dedication and the hope in this room. I'm reminded why we gather to celebrate every life and to lift up those who cannot speak for themselves."

Connor Bales, pastor of Oklahoma City, Quail Springs, then led the room in prayer before Speaker of the House Kyle Hilbert and Sen. Lonnie Paxton, President Pro Tempore, each recognized those from the House of Representatives and Senate respectively who were in attendance.

Gov. Kevin Stitt was unable to attend the event in person, but addressed the gathering through a video message saying that he supported Rose Day and the pro-life cause.

"As governor I am committed to Oklahoma remaining not just a top 10 state, but the number one pro-life state in America by protecting unborn children and supporting abortion-vulnerable women," Stitt said.

Then Oklahoma Lt. Gov. Matt Pinnell, highlighted the importance of pro-life legislation, saying that if laws couldn't get the issue of life right, then nothing else mattered. He also spoke on the importance of providing support for babies after birth.

"I am proud of the efforts (with the state agencies)," Pinnell said. "We have a long way to go, but I am certainly very proud of where we are today."



HUNDREDS OF PRO-LIFE SUPPORTERS ATTEND ANNUAL ROSE DAY AT STATE CAPITOL (CONT.)

Following this, Hope Pregnancy Ministries Executive Director Gayla White presented statistics about how chemical abortion pills have become the dominant form of abortion. She also emphasized that women who have taken the abortion pill still have a chance to reverse it, if they seek help within 72 hours of taking the pill.

“There is a 66 percent chance of saving the baby and 100 percent safe for both the mother and baby,” White said.

Those women who wish to reverse an abortion pill can find help through ministries like Hope Pregnancy Centers.

After another song by Oklahoma Baptist Children’s Chorus, Cara Armstrong, mother of actress and pro-life advocate Mia Armstrong, gave her testimony.

“Before I held a microphone or ever stood at a podium, I was just a mom receiving news that I never thought that I would hear,” Cara said. “That the daughter I had dreamed about my whole life, that I had prayed for, would have Down syndrome.”

Cara spoke about how disheartened she was to hear the news, but she wasn’t defeated. Despite numerous doctors advising her to have an abortion, Cara did not listen and kept her child, all while keeping her heart and eyes directly on God.

“God does not wait for perfect conditions,” she said. “He releases purpose in the middle of disruption. The world looks at an unplanned pregnancy or a pre-natal diagnosis as inconvenient and says, ‘end it.’ God looks at the same circumstances and says, ‘this is where I will show My glory.’”

Being born with Down syndrome has not prevented Mia in any way from living a full life and spreading joy wherever she goes. Later in life, Mia became a SAG-AFTRA actress, voiceover artist, pro-life advocate and author who made history as the first child with Down syndrome to voice act a cartoon character.

“My parents chose life for me, and today I am standing up for life,” Mia said. “People always ask me, ‘why are you so passionate about ending abortion?’ I say it’s because I am living proof that every life has purpose.”

Mia stressed that every life has worth, no matter what a diagnosis says, and how God has been providing for her and her family. Mia concluded by highlighting the importance of Rose Day and how society must continue to embrace children with Down syndrome and other disabilities, not look away from them.

“Rose Day is about changing hearts, changing minds and changing laws,” she said. “To the children here today:

your life matters. To the parents here today: your vote matters. And to our legislators: your decisions matter.”

In celebration of Mia’s birthday, which was Tue. Feb. 3, those in the room sang her “Happy Birthday,” and then Archbishop Paul Coakley of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City led a closing prayer.

Oklahoma Baptists have participated in Rose Day since 1991. For more information, or to view video from Rose Day, visit roseday.life.



Cara Armstrong, mother of Mia Armstrong and pro-life advocate speaking at Rose Day.



Mia Armstrong, renowned SAG-AFTRA actress, author and pro-life advocate, speaking at Rose Day.



OKLAHOMA BAPTISTS' BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOCUS ON GOSPEL IMPACT DURING MEETING AT THE VINE

by Messenger Staff

On Feb. 2, members of the Board of Directors for Oklahoma Baptists met for their regularly scheduled board meeting. The meeting took place at The Vine in Oklahoma City, which is a ministry of Oklahoma Baptist Homes for Children (OBHC) "that provides a safe, nurturing residential environment for single mothers and their children."

The meeting included times of business, fellowship and prayer. Some of the key presenters were Oklahoma Baptists Executive Director-Treasurer Todd Fisher; Oklahoma Baptists Chief Financial Officer Leslie Osborn; Oklahoma Baptists President Owen Nease, pastor of Oklahoma City, Emmaus; as well as the presidents from each of the Oklahoma Baptists Affiliates—OBHC, Oklahoma Baptist University (OBU), Baptist Village Communities (BVC) and WatersEdge.

Board members approved a number of recommendations, including the Board's Finance Committee recommendation "that the 2027 Cooperative Program allocation be distributed 40 percent Southern Baptist Convention / 45 percent Oklahoma Baptists / 15 percent Affiliates." That recommendation was approved unanimously and represents the same allocation as 2026. Board members also unanimously approved plans to fund Gospel-centered projects from the overage in 2025 Oklahoma Baptists budget. The projects included funds for training and equipping multi-vocational pastors, for the Prison Divinity program through OBU and providing a "13th check" as part of "Mission: Dignity" program for retirement-aged ministers, workers and their widows.

Fisher shared how Oklahoma Baptists are "advancing the Gospel together." He highlighted recent Gospel-impact in the areas of evangelism, events, pastoral equipping and leadership. Fisher also spoke to continued campus improvements at Falls Creek Conference Center, including the forthcoming debut of a new large-scale ropes course feature at the campgrounds.

OBHC President James Swain and Brent Parsons, director at The Vine, highlighted the life-changing impact of its ministry, among other OBHC ministries. OBU President Heath Thomas gave an update on the campus improvements continuing to take place following the devastating tornado in 2023. Renovation work on OBU's Shawnee Hall was completed and re-opened with significant improvements last year.

BVC President Bill Pierce shared key updates on the ministry's growing impact in aging services. Pierce shared that a search committee is in place for his successor, following his forthcoming retirement. WatersEdge CEO

Robert Kellogg shared that the "25 by 25" goal, launched more than 13 years ago, to "distribute \$25 million annually to Baptist ministries and Christian causes by the year 2025" was met and exceeded.

In addition to hearing financial and business reports, ministry reports were delivered by Oklahoma Baptist staff and several board members who serve as pastors and lay leaders in churches across Oklahoma.

The next scheduled board meeting is May 5 at Mustang, Chisholm Heights.



Board member Nick Johnson shares a devotional during the board meeting.

CHURCH NEWS

TRIBUTES



Dan Cusher, pastor of Ada, Homer, died Feb. 10. Cusher served in the United States Air Force for more than 20 years before retiring in 1976. He served as pastor of Ahloso, First before serving at Ada, Homer.



Doug Moore, Youth Ministry & Children's Coordinator at Lexington, First, died on Feb. 15. Doug served in a variety of ministries to students. He attended Oklahoma Baptist University and later Liberty University, where he earned his Master's Degree in Religious Studies. He first worked as Youth Pastor at OKC, Kelham Ave. in OKC. In 2001, the couple settled in Lexington and began their ministry there. Many became aware of the Moore family and prayed for Doug and his wife Ricki Lea and their son Xander, who passed away in 2013 after a battle with cancer. Services for Moore will be held on Feb. 19 at 10 a.m. at Purcell, First.



Mary Ellen Warren died Feb. 14 in Taos, New Mexico. Warren served American Indians and Spanish speaking congregations in Oklahoma through the Home Mission Board, now the North American Mission Board. A graveside service and burial will be held at 1:00 p.m., Friday, Feb. 27 at Resthaven Cemetery.

UPCOMING EVENTS/INFORMATION

Sending Church Lab - Feb 17

Oklahoma City, Cherokee Hills
5700 NW 63rd St.
Oklahoma City, OK

Chaplain Manual/OSFA Training - March 5-7

Naomi Paget, Instructor – Cost \$60.00

Baptist Building
300 Johnny Bench Dr., Ste. 300
Oklahoma City, OK

To register, please email

pjones@oklahomabaptists.org

DR Orientation/Credentialing – March 28

DR Team Center
7180 NW Expressway
Oklahoma City, OK

Register online at okdisasterhelp.org

CISM Training - April 2-3

Greg Giltner, Instructor – Cost \$50.00

Baptist Building
300 Johnny Bench Dr., Ste. 300
Oklahoma City, OK

To register, please email

pjones@oklahomabaptists.org

OKLAHOMA BAPTISTS

2026 ADVANCE CONFERENCE
MARCH 2-3, 2026 | MOORE, FIRST

CP COOPERATIVE PROGRAM

OKLAHOMA BAPTISTS

MISSION IGNITION

Mission Event for Kids Grades 1-6

February 28, 2026
9 am - 2 pm
\$15 in advance
\$20 at the door

LAUNCH PADS
Duncan, Immanuel
Enid, First
Moore, First
Tahlequah, First
Tulsa, South Tulsa

REGISTRATION OPENS
January 6, 2026

REGISTRATION DEADLINE
January 22, 2026

PROJECT ACTIVITY REPORTS DUE (OPTIONAL)
January 12, 2026

To learn more and register, go to:
OKLAHOMABAPTISTS.ORG/MISSION-IGNITION