

THE



INFORMER

The Informer is the official publication of the
South Carolina State Association of Original Free Will Baptists, Inc.

Address all correspondence to

Rev Mike Jones P O Box 13266, Florence, SC 29504

(843) 662-5010

Email: Mike@scfwb.com

November - December 2004

MARK YOUR CALENDERS:

December 31, 2004. The SCFWB State Office will close the books on 2004. If you have funds that need to be distributed in 2004 then they must be into the State Office before this date.

Jan 8, 2005- Central Conference meets at First FWB Church, Hamlet, NC

Jan 15, 2005- True Life Conference meets at Calvary FWB Church, Gastonia, NC

Jan 20-21, 2005- South Carolina Conference Evangelism Conference and Annual meeting at Lebanon FWB Church, Effingham, SC

with guest speaker, Rev. Guy Owens

Jan 22, 2005- Eastern Conference meets at Williams Hill FWB Church, Hemingway, SC

Jan 29, 2005- Beaver Creek Annual Conference at First FWB Church of Inman.

February 24-25, 2005- South Carolina State Association meets with the Central Conference at Evergreen FWB Church, Conway.

February 26, 2005- Palmetto Conference meets at New Vision FWB Church, Rock Hill.

March 19, 2005- State WAC meeting at Fairview FWB Church, Spartanburg with

Brenda Kay Hanna Roach at Speaker. This year's project will be to build a Church in India- \$15,000 (I know you

ladies, you can build two!!)

July 17-20- National Association of Free Will Baptists meets at Louisville, Kentucky.



TIME TO REJOICE



- Because Souls are being Saved. Pastor Clay Cordell called recently and reported that 80 people have been saved in the last 11 weeks at Canaan FWB Church of Lancaster. This has allowed them to pay \$97,000.00 on their church debt and they anticipate paying the remaining \$100,000.00 of debt by Easter of 2005- Glory!

All across our State this year Pastors have come up to me at conference meetings and rejoiced in the harvest being reaped for God. It is a good time to be a Free Will Baptist in South Carolina.

- Because God is Providing Needs. Pastor Wayland Owens called this week and reported that a couple he had helped several years ago visited his church and left a \$17,000.00 offering in the plate- Glory! Tithing Churches all across our state are experiencing an outpouring of God's blessings because of their obedience to God's plan (Giving through the State Plan of Support is up nearly \$50,000.00 compared to this time last year). If all of our Churches would faithfully tithe their income then all of our mission works, the Children's Home, and other state ministries could all operate in the black. We have the potential if we have the participation.



- Because God came to live with men so that men could live with God. Don't X out Christ this Christmas (Isn't it interesting that Halloween and Christmas both have the same number of letters but you never see anyone write xween for Halloween). Put Christ on the throne of your heart and in the middle of your celebration. God is doing great things for SCFWB. I can hardly wait until next year to see what other blessings He has for us!

MERRY CHRISTMAS

From the SCFWB State Office
and Christian Book Store.

Isa 9:6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

Pastor Elro Driggers is greatly rejoicing at the wonderful **Home Coming this year at Beulah FWB Church**. On Sunday, October 10th the church had 325 in attendance (which meant they had to put out chairs, send the kids off to Children's Church, and feed people in 3 different shifts!). Two other items made Home Coming special this year- The beautiful new Stained Glass windows in the Sanctuary were dedicated and the Church accepted a gift of 6 acres of land adjacent to the Church (giving them a total of 12 acres of land now with over a mile of highway frontage- Glory!). They also rejoiced in their recently installed new 45 foot flag pole. Since coming out of retirement to Pastor this country church, Rev. Elro Driggers has led them to many physical improvements, financial stability, and an increasing burden for world missions. What a great future potential lays ahead for this church.



Freedom "Original" Freewill Baptist Church of Ladson showed their love and appreciation to Pastor Jim and Mrs. Melanie Miller after the Sunday evening services on October 24, 2004. The congregation was able to "*get one over*" on Pastor Jim (which wasn't an easy task!). A surprise celebration and a gift of money was given to Pastor Jim and Mrs. Melanie for their love and dedication to the Lord.

Pastor Jim was called to Freedom on February 14, 2004. There have been 12 baptisms and 26 new members since that time. God has truly blessed. We are very thankful and look forward to God's continued blessings.



North Spartanburg FWB Church celebrated Home Coming on Sunday, Nov. 21st with special singing by "Anointed Witness" and SCFWB Executive Secretary, Mike Jones as guest speaker. Pastor Russel McCoy began the day with an excellent Sunday School lesson before the special services began. A friend of Pastor Russel, Mr. Edward Skaggs, came all the way from Florida to be a part of this special day and he blessed everyone's heart with several special songs to begin the worship service before the special music. Following the music and the message everyone enjoyed a good time of food and fellowship.



Home Coming at Little Bethel FWB Church, Johnsonville, SC turned out to be more than that for Pastor Joe Cagle. In addition to special music, a wonderful meal, and a message from the State Executive Secretary the church had a special surprise for Brother Joe. The members of the church knew Brother Joe was celebrating his 40th year in the ministry so they asked the Deacons and the Executive Secretary to present Brother Joe and wife, Jeraldine, a well deserved plaque of appreciation for all their years of faithful service for the Lord.



Another praise item - Little Bethel allowed Tim and Kristi Johnson (Missionaries to Spain) the use of their fully furnished (including utilities!) Parsonage the last time they were home and will do so again when they return in December- Glory! What a help this church is to the work of God.

Salem FWB Church, Coward is happy to welcome Rev. John Driggers as their new Pastor. Brother John comes to Salem from a long term pasturage at Camp Branch FWB Church, Scranton. Salem Church is being completely remodeled following a lightning strike fire earlier this year and they hope to be able to occupy the remodeled facility by the first of the new year.





Mrs. Vangie Eaddy told about how it felt to be one of the first children at the Home

A beautiful fall day greeted the throng of people who attended the annual **Children's Home Day** at the SCFWB Home for children. Excitement filled the air in anticipation of the day's events and the day's program began to a packed house.

First on the agenda was the introduction of the new director and his wife, Rev Roy and Paula Roach. Then excellent special music was presented by departing director, Rev. James Wilhide and his family. This was followed by emotional testimonies from former residents of the home, Mrs. Vangie Eaddy and Mr. Tommy Barron.

Chairman of the Children's Home board, Rev. Tim Hackett, presented the Wilhides with a plaque commemorating their 12 years of service at the Home and then presented them a check for \$6,000 as past payment for the unclaimed retirement benefits of the Wilhides. This was followed by testimonies by Children's Home residents Amy Yarborough and Robbie Smith and by Dustin Snipes, son of dorm parents, Tim and Wendy Snipes. A memory book signed by all the children and staff was then presented to the Wilhides by Rev. Tim Snipes.

This great day was capped off by the receiving of the 55th anniversary offering for the Home of \$20,824.19.



Mr Tommy Barron shared about how the Home had ministered to him and how he wanted to help the home in return



The Wilhides introduce new Directors, Rev. Roy and Paula Roach.



Special Music was provided by the Wilhide Family



Amy Yarborough, testified to the impact the Wilhides had on the Children in the Home.



Dustin Snipes, son of House Parents, Tim and Wendy Snipes expressed how the Wilhides had helped him in his life.



Robbie Smith "preached" a little about how the Home had helped change his life.

The SCFWB Christian Book Store wishes to express appreciation to all our churches for your kindness and cooperation during the recent change in Randall House Literature. Brother Rickey has worked long hard hours trying to make the switch as painless as possible and he appreciates your continued support (Remember, Brother Rickey's salary and the utilities for the Book Store and State Office are paid from our Book Store sales).

Several items to note:

- 1) The Old Classic Literature is still available for the adult classes as well as the new Clear Literature.
- 2) A few people have made the decision to change to other publishers. The Christian Book Store is able to obtain this for you and would appreciate your business.
- 3) Beginning with the Spring Quarter, we will revert to the policy of reimbursing only 50% of returned Sunday School Literature, which must be returned within 30 days of the beginning of a new quarter. (This is a Randall House Policy due to the fact that this is Dated Material and cannot be resold).



The Staff and Children of the SCFWB Home for Children wish you a very Merry Christmas

THE MYSTERY CHURCH AND THE CRACK OF DOOM

It is sometimes difficult to comprehend that the small, seemingly insignificant events of life can be inexorably bound to those monumental occurrences that leave permanent marks in the collective memory we call history. Consider, for example, the convergence of events that took place in the hot, humid darkness on the night of August 31, 1886.

The event that is recorded in history was a powerful earthquake. The seismic history of the southeastern United States is dominated by the 1886 earthquake that occurred in the Coastal Plain near Charleston, South Carolina. It was one of the largest historic earthquakes in eastern North America, and by far the largest earthquake in the southeastern United States. A major shock, lasting less than one minute, resulted in about sixty deaths and extensive damage to the city of Charleston. The impact was felt as far away as the state of Wisconsin and the island of Cuba.

Were it not for one newspaper article, however, the second occurrence would have likely not been remembered today. The article in the Florence Morning News, written sometime around 1959 by James A. Rogers, reveals a fascinating glimpse into an incident that involved an unidentified Free Will Baptist church, a Methodist minister, a revival meeting that ran late into the night, and the great Charleston earthquake. All of this was seen through the eyes of a thirteen year old boy who there on that fateful night. The irony of all this is that the consequences of the first event, which is recorded in history, were temporary, while the consequences of the second event, which have been practically forgotten, have eternal implications. The article reads:

"St. Paul Methodist Church near Coward had its beginning in an earthquake. At least, that's the story told by T. E. Matthews of Florence, an 86 year-old retired railroad man. It was August 1886, the year and



month of the "big shake", and T. E. Matthews was a 13 year-old boy. The Rev. Daniel Durant, a Methodist minister, had secured permission from the Rev. Bob Gause, a Free-will Baptist, to hold a meeting in Gause's church. There were few churches and religion wasn't prospering. The area around Coward, then in Williamsburg County, was thinly settled and big tracts of land were the rule. During the searing days of August, with the crops laid by and the farm population enjoying a breather, the Methodist Durant approached the Free-Will Baptist Gause requesting permission to do some preaching in the Baptist meeting house. It was granted. Things weren't going so well on the night of August 31 when

Preacher Durant called for prayer. The audience was as cold as a frozen cube. The altar call went unheeded. The preacher's words flew back in his face like shafts of steel. It was then that the "big shake" came, right in the middle of his prayer. It was first a small tremor, then it came like roaring thunder. In the fervor of his prayer, the preacher had warmed to the occasion. Tears trickled down his face out of compassionate concern for lost souls. The floor of the church heaved slightly and the walls jerked sharply. The preacher felt the Spirit working. "Shake 'em again, Lord" he shouted. "Shake 'em again." From the deep bowels of the earth, the thunder rolled upward. The meeting house shook and swayed. The congregation went through the windows and doors in terrified flight. They'd never known such quick and devastating answer to a prayer. It had come like the crack of doom. That was the real beginning of the revival. All else had been prelude. After that, there was hardly kneeling room at the altar. Confessions were loud and sincere. Young and old presented themselves for church membership, including 13 year-old T. E. Matthews. Sometime after that the Free-Will Baptist church was torn down and St. Paul Methodists built themselves a church. It still stands today, its hand-dressed lumber as sound and solid as the confessions that followed the crack of doom on that fearful August night in 1886. That's the story told me by the 13 year-old boy who is now 86."

There is one observation that should be noted, and some questions that should be raised in regards to the article. The observation has to do with the fact that, by most accounts, the earthquake struck at 9:50 pm. Imagine the reaction in modern times if a worship service extended to almost 10:00 pm. .



Rev. Joe McKnight
SC State Historian
Member NAFWB
Historical Commission

The questions concern the identity of “Rev. Bob Gause”, and the identity and location of the Free Will Baptist church. Unfortunately, there are no records for the South Carolina General Conference for the time period of 1885 through 1896. Whatever can be known about the names and locations of churches must be determined by analyzing information prior to and after the blank spots in the documentation, and by consulting sources other than the Conference Minutes. Allowances must also be made for the possibility of churches beginning and dying during that time period. Research is ongoing, and hopefully a future article will identify the church that “shook and swayed” when the “crack of doom” paid a visit on a hot, steamy August night.

(Note: I am indebted to Mr. Calvin Grooms of Tabernacle FWB Church of Coward, who furnished the newspaper article that began this line of research. Anyone who has information that may be linked to Free Will Baptist history is requested to contact me. Also, I am available for any service if a church is interested in a presentation on the history of South Carolina Free Will Baptists. Phone: Home- (843) 665-8004. Cell- (843) 229-1949)



Pastor Dennis Tolley and family express their appreciation to the church for recognizing them on this special day.

Gaffney FWB Church celebrated Pastor Appreciation Day on Sunday, Oct. 31st with special music by the Roger's Trio and a message by SCFWB Executive Secretary, Mike Jones about the duties of a Church toward their Pastor (See Bottom of this Page). The Church then presented Pastor Dennis Tolley and his family several gifts in recognition of the fine job he was doing before everyone enjoyed an excellent meal together.



The Rogers Trio stirred hearts with “blue grass” gospel music.



l-r: Rev. Tom Hill, Rev Marty Cox, Rev. Neil Hinson, Rev. Tony Miles, Rev and Mrs. Don Squires, Rev Steward Norris, Rev Buddy Seay

The Central Conference **ordained Rev. Don Squires** into the Gospel Ministry during a wonderful service at White Savannah FWB Church, Conway, SC on Wednesday, November 3rd. The ordination message was delivered by Pastor Buddy Seay. Brother Don is presently the pastor of a church in North Carolina.



Rev Darren Squires, Pastor of Socastee FWB Church rejoices that Brother Don is ordained

Gilead FWB Church, Lake City, SC is actively seeking a **Youth Pastor**. For further information Contact Pastor Larry McAlister at: Gilead FWB Church 1036 North Matthews Road Lake City, SC 29560 (843) 394-8887



Pastor Tim and Pam Hackett look over the new car given to them by Fairview FWB Church for Pastor Appreciation on the first Sunday in October- Glory!

How to be a Blessing to your Pastor:

- 1) Pray for him Privately. He is in spiritual warfare and he needs the power of God on his life.
- 2) Praise him Publicly. Make people want to come to hear the message of God from your Pastor.
- 3) Pay him Plenty. A workman is worthy of his hire and most Pastors average working over 60 hours a week. Make sure he is paid at least as much as the highest paid member of your deacon board is paid.

Sunday, November 7th was "I love my Church" day at Tabernacle FWB Church (Coward, SC.) as they celebrated the tenth anniversary of their new sanctuary. What Pastor Danny Stone and his wife, Angie, did not know was that it was also "I Love my Pastor" Sunday.

The surprise began for Pastor Danny when a humorous skit, written by member Teresa Mims and performed by Deacon Calvin Grooms and his wife, Merry, was presented during the Sunday School hour. Then the Children's Church, Junior Church, Young at Heart, and the Deacon board presented gifts before the Church surprised them with a gift certificate for two nights at a Bed and Breakfast Inn in Charleston, SC. This was followed by a testimony time as members of the Church expressed their appreciation for the ministry of this fine couple. All of this was followed by a fellowship meal enjoyed by all.



The Tabernacle FWB Church (Coward, SC) Women Active for Christ held their November meeting on Saturday, Nov. 13th with special guest speaker, Missionary to Brazil, Geneva Poole. After the service the Ladies presented Mrs. Geneva a \$250.00 gift certificate to Magnolia Mall in appreciation for the work she and brother Bobby have done in Brazil.

Sunday, Oct 10th was much more than a normal Home Coming for Cornerstone FWB Church (Whiteville, NC). Pastor Steward Norris was honored for his 11 years of faithful service to the Church and then led his deacon board in the burning of the mortgage on the church. Guest speaker for the day was Rev. Andrew Gleason of St. John FWB

Church (Pamplico, SC) who delivered a challenging message on living a life dedicated to Christ. All of this was followed by a great fellowship meal.

The activities of the day concluded during the Evening service where many of the church members reflected on the beginning of the Church and rejoiced in the blessings of the Lord on the Church throughout the years.



Sunday, November 14th was Pastor Appreciation Day at Walker's Chapel FWB Church in Sumter. Pastor Marco was given \$200 by the church and other gifts by individual Church members at the conclusion of the Morning Service. A fellowship dinner (including a lovely cake for the Pastor) was followed by a special singing featuring the group "Deliverance".



Fellowship FWB Church, Florence surprised Interim Pastor, Eddie Hobbs with a special Pastor Appreciation service during their annual Fall Festival. Monetary gifts and cards of encouragement helped the people express their appreciation. And the next morning the people saw the results of Brother Eddie's hard work as 11 new people attended church services as a result of the contacts that were made during the Fall Festival- Glory!



PURSUE HIS HEART

IN THE HEART OF THE OZARKS

Women Nationally Active for Christ invites you to Pursue His Heart at the 2005 National Retreat, March 3-5, in Branson, MO.

Missionary speakers, worship, drama and time alone with God will give you a renewed vision of God's heart for the world.

All sessions of this Thursday evening through Saturday morning event will be held at the beautiful Chateau on the Lake. Branson's only AAA four-diamond hotel, the Chateau offers comfort, convenience and excellent service.

Each room boasts real beds and a breathtaking view of either the hills or the lake. Relax near the indoor waterfall. Chat with a friend at one of the many sitting areas. Explore the library.

If you're inclined to shop, Branson's nearby outlets, antique shops and craft venues offer a wide variety in products and prices.

Meals are not included in the retreat package, but the hotel will offer a special event rate on certain meals. Fast food and other restaurants are a short driving distance away.

ROOM RATES FOR TWO NIGHTS' LODGING

Traditional Deluxe—either doubles or king
(1-4 persons)—\$218
Per person rate with four in a room: \$54.50
(plus taxes and resort fees)

Chateau King—one king with sleeper sofa
More spacious room with comfortable sitting area
(1-4 persons)—\$262
Per person rate with four in a room: \$65.50
(plus taxes and resort fees)

Ambassador Suite—one king and sleeper sofa
Spacious room with sitting and kitchen areas
Complete with microwave and mini-fridge
(1-4 persons)—\$328
Per person rate with four in a room: \$82.00
(plus taxes and resort fees)

Rates good only until registration deadline.
Payable directly to the hotel. Rates do not include applicable taxes or resort fees. To secure reservation, individuals will be charged one night's room and fees. Any room cancellation after January 31, 2005 will incur one night's charges.

MAKE ROOM RESERVATIONS DIRECTLY WITH HOTEL 1-888-333-LAKE MUST ASK FOR WNAC RATES

MAIL REGISTRATION FEE AND FORM BELOW TO WNAC

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT LEGIBLY

Name _____ Amount Enclosed \$ _____

Address _____

Church (or WAC group) _____

Phone _____ Email address _____

REGISTRATION FEE
\$35
\$50 AFTER JANUARY 31
\$15 ONE DAY ONLY

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: JANUARY 31, 2005

RETREAT REGISTRATION FEE MUST ACCOMPANY THIS FORM.
GROUPS ARE WELCOME TO MAIL FORMS TOGETHER AND PAY WITH ONE CHECK,
BUT EACH PERSON MUST FILL OUT A FORM. FEE IS NON-REFUNDABLE BUT
SUBSTITUTIONS ARE ALLOWED.

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO WNAC

MAIL TO: WNAC
P. O. BOX 5002
ANTIOCH, TN 37011-5002

OFFICE USE ONLY

Ray Lewis to Lead Board of Retirement- The Reverend D. Ray Lewis has been selected as the next director for the Board of Retirement and Insurance. The 57-year-old North Carolina native will continue in his role as associate director with the agency until July 31, 2005. He assumes the director's duties effective August 1, 2005.

Lewis joined the Board of Retirement staff in May 1983 as business manager. He was named associate director in 1996. Lewis will succeed current director, Reverend Bill Evans, who plans to focus his energies on the Free Will Baptist Foundation.

Brother Lewis pastored six years in Durham, North Carolina, and Tuscaloosa, Alabama, before joining the Board of Retirement staff. He also taught in the business department at Free Will Baptist Bible College. Lewis is a graduate of the University of North Carolina (Pembroke) and Free Will Baptist Bible College.

Ray and Ida Lewis are faithful members at Donelson Free Will Baptist Church in Nashville, Tennessee. They have two children—son Chris and his wife Kelli live in New York City, while daughter Kelly lives in Murfreesboro, Tennessee.



Denominational Magazine Names Managing Editor- The 2004 session of the National Association of Free Will Baptists authorized creation of a single denominational magazine to replace six existing departmental publications. Executive Secretary Keith Burden said the oversight committee (directors of participating departments) selected 32-year-old Eric Thomsen as the magazine's managing editor.

A former national youth coordinator and teen curriculum editor, Thomsen is currently director of art and marketing at Randall House Publications. The Florida native has served 10 years as minister of youth at Bethlehem Free Will Baptist Church in Ashland City, Tennessee.

Eric graduated from Free Will Baptist Bible College in 1995. He is pursuing graduate studies at Trevecca Nazarene University. He and his wife, Jennifer, recently settled outside of Nashville with their five-year-old daughter, Victoria Elizabeth.

Mr. Thomsen will assume editorial responsibilities January 3, 2005. The oversight committee plans to announce the name of the new magazine in the near future. Target date for the start-up issue is Spring 2005.

(Interesting Note- Brother Eric is the nephew of Mrs. Nancy Driggers, wife of Pastor Elro Driggers of Beulah FWB Church.)





South Carolina State Association of Free Will Baptists
Rev Mike Jones, Executive Secretary
P O Box 13266 Florence, SC 29504
WWW. SCFWB.Com (843) 662-5010



Graduating Students: Left to Right, Top to Bottom.

Erica & Frank Cartagena

Janet Moreno

Maria, Diego, & Sara Cueva

Alfredo Cenizero & Jesus
Gonzalez

Jamie Huante & Gabriel
Mondragon

The Gwen Hendrix Hispanic Bible Institute held its second Graduation service on Saturday, December 4, 2004 with former National Home Missions Director, Rev. Trymon Messer as guest speaker.

Headquartered at the First FWB Church of Inman, this National Home Missions Bible Institute is training Hispanic workers to reach people for Christ all over the United States, and even into other countries.

California Christian College (The FWB College in California) is attempting to regenerate their Alumni Association. If you are a former student or helper then please contact the college at California Christian College
4881 E University Ave
Fresno, CA 93703
www.calchristiancollege.org

A special rate has been arranged at the Sleep Inn of Conway for our State Association Meeting, February 24-25, 2005. This motel is located a little more than a mile from Evergreen FWB Church (Site of the 2005 State Meeting) and is convenient to restaurants and shopping in Conway.

Rates: (Make sure you tell them you are with the South Carolina Free Will Baptist State Association) [Available rooms include rooms with a King bed or with 2 queens beds].

1 or 2 people- \$45.00

3 people- \$50.00

4 people- \$55.00

Sleep Inn of Conway

3345 Church Street

(Hwy 501 North)

Conway, SC 29526

Phone: (843) 365-2828

email: sleepinconway@sc.rr.com



Pastor Jake Creech presented James and Carolyn Wilhide a plaque and a gift of appreciation for their years of service at the Children's Home during the fifth Sunday community sing at Horse Branch FWB Church on Sunday, Oct 31st.

The service was followed by a reception in

which many in the Turbeville community expressed their appreciation for the Wilhide's ministry. (Brother Wilhide is happy to report that attendance at High Point has increased from 60-70 to about 110 since he began full time ministry)

