

January - February 1997



The Informer

The Informer is the official bi-monthly publication of the South Carolina State Association of Free Will Baptists. Address all correspondence to Ron Moore, Editor, Post Office Box 13266, Florence, South Carolina, 29504 or call (803) 662-5010.

**1997 Session
South Carolina State Association of
Free Will Baptists**

**Peace Free Will Baptist Church
Spartanburg, South Carolina**

February 27 - 28

Speakers Include:

Rev. Sherwood Lee, State Moderator
Rev. David Crowe, National Home Missions
Rev. Robert Rose, Pastor, Mt. Elon, Pamplico
Rev. Harold Moore, Pastor, Victory, Jacksonville
Rev. Keith Bartlett, Pastor, North Spartanburg
Rev. John Cody, Pastor, Mt. Carmel, York
Rev. Billy Baker, Moderator, Central Association

Mortgage on State Property in Florence Paid Off

The five-year project of purchasing property to house the Promotional Office and bookstore ministries has been completed! The final payment of \$14,300 was made on January 13, 1997. Though we were just over \$2,000 short in funds necessary to make the payment, monies were borrowed from other accounts. We are confident that by the annual session of the State Association the remaining \$2,000 will have come in. South Carolina Free Will Baptists have worked hard to purchase this property and are to be commended for their commitment to provide the State with adequate facilities.

'MOORE' THOUGHTS From the Editor

We are entering a very busy time of the year for our state ministries. Throughout February and the first part of March we will have the WNAC District and State meetings. The 1997 session of the South Carolina State Association is the last of February. The last Sunday in March is Roll Call Sunday and the last Sunday in April is Foreign Missions Sunday.

As I look toward the future, I sense an excitement, enthusiasm, and expectation for our state ministries: the ladies have been and will continue to be active in supporting home and foreign missions; the Children's Home has received many blessings from the Lord; the Aiken mission project is progressing; and God has blessed the State Office and bookstore.

I believe that this year's annual session of the State Association will be tremendous. As well as having good speakers, we will hear exciting reports from our state ministries. A new Foreign Mission Plan of Support will be presented for adoption. The mood of our people is that it's time we something about the cycle of mission account deficits and crisis fund raising.

The Promotional Office has had a good year. Our operational fund has finished in the black! The final property payment has also been made and the title is now lien free! The future looks very promising as well. We anticipate God's blessing as we develop a resource center, workshops and seminars.

We begin the new year with great expectations concerning the bookstore. We believe that 1997 will put this ministry in the black. We are also confident that God will send us the right person to work in the bookstore and help us develop the resource center and the teaching ministries.

We realize that God has used Free Will Baptist people all across the State to make these blessings possible. Thank you for your part—a willing heart! Your faithfulness to support these ministries in the past is encouraging as we prepare to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century. Let us all say with joy and thanksgiving,

"Praise God from whom all blessings flow!"

Community Gets Face Lift

Community Free Will Baptist Church in Florence, South Carolina, has had major renovation projects completed during the past year. The congregation has added a new steeple (\$5,000) and a new 4' by 10' lighted sign (\$1,500). They have also installed new flooring in the fellowship hall, restrooms, nursery and pastor's study (\$3,000). Just before Thanksgiving, the church added a 54 car paved parking lot (\$14,580).



Indeed, the Lord has blessed Community in these and other ways. Since February 1996, over 100 people have been saved. Most of them have remained with the church. Since Rev. William Justice became pastor of the church in June 1994, the congregation has grown from an average attendance in the low twenties to the upper eighties.

First Greenwood Celebrates Homecoming

First Free Will Baptist Church in Greenwood, South Carolina, held its annual homecoming October 20, 1996. Promotional Director Ron Moore was the special speaker and the Southern Heart provided the special music. Dinner was served in the fellowship hall after the morning services.



Rev. Paul Reid

Rev. Paul Reid, pastor of the church, moved with his family to Greenwood in June 1974 to begin a Free Will Baptist Mission. Less than five years later, on February 25, 1979, the mission held an organization meeting and the work became known as First FWB Church of Greenwood. The Greenwood ministry is one of several churches begun by the Beaver Creek Home Missions Board.

The original location of the mission was on East Cambridge Avenue. The organizational service for the church was held in a trailer-chapel located on East Durst Avenue, their present location. The first service in their new sanctuary-Sunday School facility was on Mother's Day 1984.

Mt. Elon Honors Pastor

Mt. Elon Free Will Baptist Church surprised their pastor, Rev. Robert Rose, by honoring him with a Pastor's Appreciation Day November 24, 1996. Family and friends from Timmonsville, Spartanburg, and as far a way as Gastonia and Maggie Valley joined in the celebration. Though the service was a real blessing to Brother Rose, there were a few embarrassing moments—especially when his family began sharing some of his childhood antics!

Many gifts and cards were presented to the pastor by the congregation. Promotional Director Ron Moore was brought in to preach. He spoke from

Exodus 17:8ff, sharing examples of how the congregation can express their appreciation for their pastor on a daily basis. After a special plaque was presented to Brother Rose and after a time of prayer for him and his family around the altar, everyone enjoyed a delicious dinner in the fellowship hall.

Organizers of the event were Pearlline Creel (who doubled as the Master of Ceremonies), Joanne Calcutt and Mary Ann Eaddy.

Brother Rose and his family begin their ministry at Mt. Elon in January 1984.



Bro. Rose with plaque

Rev. Bobby Bowers Receives Bachelor of Theology Degree

Rev. Bobby Bowers, pastor of First Free Will Baptist Church, Greenville, South Carolina, was awarded the Bachelor of Theology by Andersonville Baptist Seminary, Camilla, Georgia in September 1996.



The diploma was presented posthumously by South Carolina Promotional Director Ron Moore on Sunday, January 3, 1997. This was a special day for Brother Bowers as it also marked the thirtieth anniversary of his ministry at the church in Greenville.

Congratulations to one of South Carolina's most faithful pastors!



Task Force Recommends Adoption of New South Carolina Foreign Mission Plan of Support

Is there anything that we can do to end the cycle of deficit missionary accounts? Isn't it time to change the emphasis of missionary furlough from crisis fund raising to ministry—giving field reports, sharing prayer requests, and ministering from God's Word? Isn't there a quicker and less expensive way of getting new missionaries to the field? **Yes, there is!**

After months of study, meetings with pastors and lay people across the State, and consultation with many of our state leaders, a special task force was formed to consider just such a plan. The task force was composed of moderators from the seven Free Will Baptist Associations (Conferences) of the State, the State's Moderator and Promotional Director, and the president of the State WNAC.

During a meeting at Peace FWB Church, Florence, January 9, the task force adopted the South Carolina Foreign Mission Plan of Support for recommendation to the fifty-fifth annual session of the State Association which will convene February 27, 1997.

The proposed plan will target missionaries appointed by the Foreign Missions Board of the National Association and who have residency ties to South Carolina. The plan is a cooperative effort that safeguards designated giving as we seek to underwrite an appropriate percentage of a missionary's support. At the heart of the plan will be an effort to raise financial "share" commitments among our churches and people. Though we do not have space to provide the details of the proposal here, we will provide them at the State Meeting.

We are excited about the potential of this plan. It will transfer the burden of raising support from missionaries to pastors and churches. It will result in better stewardship of resources, getting missionaries to the field more quickly. It will help make furlough more of what it was intended to be—allowing missionaries to focus on ministry rather than fund-raising. It will provide better access for more churches and believers to get involved. The potential of the plan is

so great the it has already been overwhelmingly endorsed by our missionaries, the Foreign Missions Board and administrative staff, and state leadership.

We encourage you to make plans to attend what will be, we believe, an exciting and historic session of the South Carolina State Association!

**Begin Now
to
Pray and Prepare
for the
South Carolina Pop Willey
and the
National Laura Bell
Barnard
Foreign Missions Offering**

April 27, 1997

Southside Sends Study Books to Russia

Southside FWB Church in Darlington, South Carolina, sent 100 translated copies of *The Preacher's Outline & Sermon Bible: Romans* to Chelyabinsk where they were distributed during a recent pastor's training seminar. The seminar was

sponsored by the National Foreign Missions Department.

Rev. Leroy Lowery, pastor of Southside, wanted to do something that would help the pastors and Baptist Churches of the recently liberated Russia people. He and his congregation decided on this project. They are to be commended for helping to meet a very real need in a rapidly growing Russian Christian community.



Russian Pastors Receive Book on Romans

Free Will Baptist Bible College



News

Bible College Receives SACS Accreditation

Free Will Baptist Bible College has been granted regional accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). The announcement was made December 10 in Nashville by the SACS Commission on Colleges. This is the culmination of a process begun by FWBBC in 1991. In December 1994, SACS granted the college Candidate status. The college has continued since then to address criteria for accreditation through intensive self-analysis and implementation.

Accreditation is not something new for the college. FWBBC has been accredited by the Accrediting Association of Bible Colleges since 1958. Further recognition was given in 1976, when the Tennessee State Department of Education licensed the college's teacher education program. SACS accreditation, therefore, is recognition by another agency of the college's quality of education. As stated by Dr. Jim Cox, the college's Director of Institutional Research, "This is a quality institution now being even more broadly recognized."

FWBBC President Tom Malone presided at a special chapel service

December 12 in thanksgiving for the new accreditation. Area Free Will Baptist pastors and employees of other National Free

Will Baptist departments joined in the celebration. Dr. Malone said, "This is an exciting time for the college." He added, "FWBBC has been and will remain a Bible college, committed to preparing men and women to serve Christ and His Church." He also noted, "In the words of one of our friends, 'This is a historical event in the life of the college.' May our God give us wisdom to use this new tool for His glory."

Bible Conference Features Dr. McComas

The Bible College has announced that Dr. Kenny McComas will be the special guest speaker during the annual Bible Conference held on campus, March 9-13, 1997. Dr. McComas is a Baptist evangelist who has preached in some of America's largest fundamental churches. He has written more than 30 books and booklets, including the life story of Dr. B.R. Lakin.

Joining Dr. McComas on the program are Free Will Baptist preachers Rev. Ralph Hampton, Bible College Professor; Dr. Melvin Worthington, National Executive Secretary; and Rev. Jack Richey, Oklahoma Executive Secretary.



Free Will Baptist Bible College's
**1997 Bible
Conference**
March 9-13, 1997
SPEAKERS:
■ Dr. Kenny McComas
■ Rev. Ralph Hampton
■ Rev. Jack Richey
■ Dr. Melvin Worthington

Parkway Burns Mortgage

Parkway FWB Church, Spartanburg, celebrates Christmas by burning the church's mortgage on December 22, 1996. Rev. Ron Moore, South Carolina FWB Promotional Director, preached the morning message.



Rev. Simmons and Deacon Vernon Carroll burn note

The Parkway church was founded by Rev. Johnnie Bullman in 1964 and was known as Heron Circle FWB Church. It was located in the Old Nativity Lutheran Church where the Waffle House sits today. That same year the church moved to their own building on Lone Oak Street.

The church grew rapidly and in a short time was averaging well over a hundred in attendance. In 1965 the church voted to support its pastor full time. The following year the congregation purchased a parsonage.

Rev. Johnny Miller was elected pastor in 1986. Under his leadership the church voted to relocate at its present location on Parris Bridge Road. The church was renamed Parkway FWB Church and the first service in the new facility was held on Easter Sunday, 1989. In 1990 the church voted to build a Family Life Center and in 1992 the parking lot was paved.

Rev. Leon Simmons became pastor of Parkway in July 1995 and in less than 18 months the church was able to make the final payment on their \$250,000 note.

Roll Call Sunday

March 30, 1997

Goal: 2500 Souls Saved

The Home Missions Department's Fourteenth annual ROLL CALL SUNDAY is scheduled for March 30, 1997. Plan for the biggest attendance ever! Pray to see 2500 souls saved!

District and State WNAC Schedule

Eastern District Auxiliary
February 8
Fellowship FFWB Church, Manning

Central District Auxiliary
February 15
Little Star FFWB Church, Johnsonville

South Carolina District
February 22
Bay Branch FFWB Church, Timmonsville

Beaver Creek District
March 1
First FFWB Church, Chester

State WNAC
March 15
Valley Falls, Spartanburg

Horse Branch Calls Rev. Charlie Carmack



Horse Branch FFWB Church, Turbeville, SC called Rev. Charlie Carmack as their new pastor. Brother Carmack is a graduate of Free Will Baptist Bible College (1982). He is an experienced pastor, having served three churches: Covenant FFWB Church, Mount Pleasant FFWB Church, and Bethlehem FFWB Church, all in middle Tennessee.

Brother Carmack has been heavily involved in denominational work. He has served on the Tennessee Home Mission Board, as assistant moderator of the Northern Quarterly of the Cumberland Association, and as moderator of the South Central Quarterly. Prior to coming to Horse Branch, he served as a State/National joint project tent-maker missionary to Lewisburg, TN. He was able to re-open the church, pay off their indebtedness and to remodel their sanctuary while there.

Brother Carmack and his wife, Ellen, have been married for 26 years. They have two sons: Joshua and Jonathan.

Welcome to South Carolina, Brother and Sister Carmack. May the Lord bless your ministry at Horse Branch!

Rev. David Anders New Pastor at Victory FFWB Church

Victory FFWB Church, Lancaster, called Rev. David Anders as their new pastor in November, 1996. Brother Anders recently retired as pastor of New Life FFWB Church where he served as pastor for more than fifteen years. After his retirement, he served Pine Grove FFWB Church in Jefferson, SC, as pastor for several months before coming to Victory.

Rev. and Mrs. Anders are excited about their new work and are looking forward to many more years of fruitful ministry. May God grant their heart's desire!

*"All our dreams can come true—if we
have the courage to pursue them"*
Walt Disney

Rev. Brian Tolliver New Pastor at Fellowship



Fellowship FFWB Church, Florence, SC, called Rev. Brian Tolliver as their new pastor. He assumed his pastoral duties on December 27, 1996.

Brother Tolliver is a native of Michigan and was saved during youth camp in 1975. His home church is the Hazel Park First FFWB Church. His wife is also a native of Michigan. They have two children: Brooke, age 5, and Adam, age 3.

Brother Tolliver is a minister in good standing with the Wolverine Association in Michigan. He attended Free Will Baptist Bible College, Nashville, Tennessee, and received his B.A. degree in 1989. Following graduation, Brother Tolliver became the part-time pastor of Faith FFWB Church in Ray Township, Michigan. In five years he lead the church to supporting the pastor full time. He comes to Fellowship from Faith.

During his years as a part-time pastor, Brother Tolliver had an interesting job. He worked as skill trades model carver; that is, he built prototypes for the automobile industry.

South Carolina welcomes Brother Tolliver and his family to the State and pray that God would give them a good ministry among us.

First Greenville Celebrates Pastor's 30th Anniversary

Rev. and Mrs. Bobby Bowers celebrated their thirtieth year of ministry at First FWB Church, Greenville, SC, on January 3, 1997. The church presented each of them with a plaque of appreciation and a check for \$1,000 (I think Joyce got the check!).



(L to R) Randy Bowers, Tony Smith, Joyce Bowers, Rev. Bobby Bowers

The extraordinary day was marked by special singing featuring young men from the church, two of whom are Brother Bowers' sons and most of whom were brought to the Lord under his ministry.

After the service, the congregation enjoyed a delicious pig pickin' meal in the fellowship hall. Over 150 people attended the special event in honor of the Bowers' faithful ministry. God bless both of you, Brother Bobby and Sister, Joyce! Your faithfulness is an inspiration to us all.

Beulah Receives Special Gifts

On December 20, 1996, the Beulah church family held a Christmas pig pickin' in the church's fellowship hall. After the meal was eaten and the gifts presented, a special announcement was made. Badger Bazen had donated a \$100,000 gift to the church to build a needed new parsonage. His son, Jeff Bazen, had donated \$10,000 to help build a new fellowship hall and to help the youth's activities fund. But that's not all the good news. Muriel Collins donated land across from the church to build the new parsonage!

Isn't the Lord good! We rejoice with the members of the Beulah Church at how God has met their needs.

Rev. James Pierce has served as pastor of the church for the past year.

First Church Darlington Completes Renovation Project

Sunday morning December 15, 1996, First FWB Church, Darlington, held its first worship service in the newly renovated sanctuary. The entire sanctuary was "gutted" and completely remodeled: new walls, ceilings, exposed beams, molding, carpet, paneling, windows, lights and sound system. The pews were also stripped, refinished, and recovered.



The renovation took five weeks, during which time the congregation met in the church's fellowship hall. The total cost of the project was \$50,000.

Rev. Michael McAuley is pastor of this fine church.

Norwood Gibson Expresses His Deepest Appreciation

After seventeen years of serving South Carolina Free Will Baptists as Promotional Director and bookstore manager, Brother Norwood Gibson officially ended his duties on December 1, 1996. Upon leaving, he expressed his sincere appreciation to the fine people of our State for their prayers, support and cooperation throughout the years of his ministry. He also wishes to thank all those, in-state and out, for their many kind words of encouragement, their cards and gifts.

Brother Gibson also wants all of you to know that the Lord is watching over him throughout his illness. He stated that the cancer is responding to treatments and that it is on a course toward remission. He requests your continued prayers.

Brother Gibson is now serving as pastor of South Oak Free Will Baptist Church, formerly the Bible FWB Church, which he founded over thirty years ago!

I know that you join me in thanking the Gibsons for their years of faithful ministry and in wishing them God's blessing in health and ministry.

*"Never be yoked to one
who refuses the yoke of Christ."*

COMING SOON!

Your Free Will Baptist Christian Bookstore will soon offer discounts to Free Will Baptist Churches, pastors and their members. Watch for details after the annual session of the State Association.

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