

The Michigan Free Will Baptist

Menorah

December Published Monthly by the Michigan State Association of Free Will Baptists **2009**

“I will not flinch in the face of sacrifice ... hesitate in the presence of the adversary ... negotiate at the table of the enemy ... ponder at the pool of popularity ... or meander in the maze of mediocrity. I won't give up ... shut up ... let up ... until I have stayed up ... stored up ... prayed up ... paid up and preached up for the cause of Jesus Christ.

I am a disciple of Jesus. I must go till He comes ... give till I drop ... preach till all know ... and work till He stops me. And when He comes for His own, He will have no problem recognizing me ... my banner will be clear!!” --An African Pastor

Merry Christmas!

**5,000,000
Steps**



- to plant churches among unreached peoples.
- to challenge teens to greater commitment to missions.
- to celebrate the last 75 years of Free Will Baptist missionary efforts.
- to raise awareness in young people about the millions without Christ.

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*Through the generosity of a \$500,000 matching gift.



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The Riggs' Update

Dear Friends,

Take a moment if you will and think back. Do you remember when God spoke to your heart and you became a believer in Jesus? May I ask you, who were the people God used in your life to influence you for Christ? (If you want to respond, I'd enjoy hearing about that, but obviously you don't have to) My guess is, except for some exceptions, most of us would say we came to Christ through the influence of a family member or a friend. It's rare that someone is led to Christ by a total stranger. The implications of that simple fact are obvious for the work of evangelism. As I look back over the years we have been in France, we have done tons of evangelistic outreaches: we've sponsored music concerts, Christian films, city-wide campaigns, open-air market ministries, door-to-door surveys, literature distribution, etc. You name it, and I'm pretty sure we've done it. And from time to time we will be asking you to pray for some special programs like that. But in all honesty, we have seen few results from those kinds of efforts. In fact, some of our efforts, though born of good intentions, probably turned more people away from the Gospel message rather than attracting them to it. Remember the last time a Jehovah's Witness knocked at your door? What was your reaction? Probably not very positive. And if we stop and think about it, that's only normal. I mean,

why should anyone open up their hearts to talk about personal issues of faith with a complete stranger?

So why am I saying all that in this letter? I think mainly to share honestly what a lot of our ministry is about, and to ask you to pray. If it's true that most people come to Christ through the influence of someone they know and trust, then if we want to influence others for Christ, we have to get to know them. We have to let them get to know us. We have to earn their trust. That takes time, effort, listening, involvement, and caring. Sometimes we wish we had a shortcut, but there really isn't a shortcut to letting people know we genuinely care about them. And really, it's only when they know we care that they're willing to listen to what we have to say.

So, we're asking you in this update to pray, not so much for the special outreach programs we have, but as we seek to build relationships with people God has brought across our path. Would you take just a moment and pray for Isabelle, Jean-Louis, Tom & his wife Jeanne. Pray for Gordon & Allison. Pray for Jean-Marie, Marylene, Ghislaine. Pray for Laetitia & her parents Béatrice & Xavier. Pray for Pauline, Enora, Jean-Jacques, Manuel, Anthony, Claudie and Jacqueline. These and many others are people God has brought into our lives, and we have the privilege and responsibility to influence them for Christ. Pray that we would be sensitive to their needs and genuinely show them Christ's

love. Pray that our witness will be positive. Pray that God will open their hearts and minds to the truth of the Gospel. Pray that we will be good communicators of the Gospel.

Thanks so much for your faithful prayers and support. May God also enable you in your mission field today.

Steve & Becky



What are you most passionate about? What do you believe in so much that you'll do whatever it takes to accomplish it? That's what Snowblast is all about! We want teenagers & youth groups to have a HUNGER to do hard things so that their world is changed for the Gospel of Jesus Christ! Hope you can join us in this pursuit!

Pre-Registration Cost: \$70 (if registered online before Jan 4th)

Registration Cost: \$85 (right up to the day of)

www.kirbychurch.com
(Registration opens Dec 1st!)

FWBBC Fall Welcome Days

NASHVILLE, TN—Seventy-one prospective students from 12 states and 26 churches attended Fall 2009 Welcome

Days November 19-21 at Free Will Baptist Bible College, according to Jeff Caudill, director of enrollment services. With parents and sponsors, the campus visitors numbered 87 for the three-day event.

Mr. Caudill said, "We were delighted to have such a promising group of high school students on campus and look forward to a number of them enrolling, several as early as next fall. The college community really came together to host the event with current students sharing their rooms with guests and answering questions. Faculty and staff assisted with the Friday evening meal and prepared desserts. We couldn't have asked for better cooperation."

Visiting high school students attended classes and chapel, interacted with FWBBC students, enjoyed a performance by the music and drama department, participated in Friday evening's Low Country Boil, attended a financial aid seminar, and more.

"I have decided to come to FWBBC," said Ron Carter, a visiting student. "I tried to get away from the idea of attending FWBBC. However, coming to Welcome Days helped me decide that I want to be here as a student."

Provost Greg Kettelman hosted a Friday reception for high school seniors, recent graduates, sponsors, and parents.

The college will sponsor other student-oriented events during spring 2010—Senior Days (January 21-23 and February 11-13) and Welcome Days (April 1-3).

Student Recruiter Rachel Dennis said, "One of the most rewarding parts of my job comes from seeing how campus dynamics change when Welcome Days guests arrive. It's exciting to watch FWBBC students pour themselves into visiting high school students who are here to determine God's plan for their lives."



PHOTO: (L) FWBBC students Nathan Barlow (IN), Hanna McCuin (IL), Courtney Edwards (SC), and Director of Recruitment Heath Hubbard serve up portions of Low Country Boil.

Christmas Appeal

The accounts of Home Missionaries Jeff Isaacs and Greg Floars are seriously in the red. Would your church receive a special Christmas Offering for Michigan Missions? Please send your special offerings designated "Michigan Missions" to the treasurer of the Michigan State Association of Free Will Baptists, Mr. William Ferguson, at 4253 Reflections Drive, Sterling Heights, MI 48314.

As of 10/30/2009 the account of Jeff Isaacs was \$12,527.55 in the red, and the account of Greg Floars was \$6,758.75 in the red. These fellows are depending on us to support them as they plant churches in these needy areas.

Christmas Censorship? Legal Guidelines Issued to Help

Rutherford Institute attorneys are preparing to deal with the annual onslaught of calls to their legal hotline regarding the censorship of Christmas celebrations. In years past, the Institute has been besieged by calls from parents and teachers alike complaining about schools changing their Christmas concerts to "winter holiday programs" and renaming Christmas "winter festival" or cancelling holiday celebrations altogether to avoid offending those who do not celebrate the various holidays. Hoping to alleviate any confusion over the do's and don'ts of celebrating Christmas in schools, workplaces and elsewhere, The Rutherford Institute has issued its "Twelve Rules of Christmas" guidelines. The list includes references to appropriate rulings. View the list [here](#). Founded in 1982 by constitutional attorney and author John W. Whitehead, The Rutherford Institute is a civil liberties organization that provides free legal services to people whose constitutional and human rights have been threatened or violated.

**The Twelve Rules of
Christmas®**

(Compiled by attorneys for The Rutherford Institute)

Unfortunately, Christmas has become a time of controversy over what can or cannot be done in terms of celebrating the holiday. In order to clear up much of the misunderstanding, the following twelve rules are offered:

1. Public school students' written or spoken personal expressions concerning the religious significance of Christmas (e.g., T-shirts with the slogan, "Jesus Is the Reason for the Season") may not be censored by school officials absent evidence that the speech would cause a substantial disruption.

2. So long as teachers are generally permitted to wear clothing or jewelry or have personal items expressing their views about the holidays, Christian teachers may not be prohibited from similarly expressing their views by wearing Christmas-related clothing or jewelry or carrying Christmas-related personal items.

3. Public schools may teach students about the Christmas holiday, including its religious significance, so long as it is taught objectively for secular purposes such as its historical or cultural importance, and not for the purpose of promoting Christianity.

4. Public school teachers may send Christmas cards to the families of their students so long as they do so on their own time, outside of school hours.

5. Public schools may include Christmas music, including those with religious themes, in their choral programs if the songs are included for a secular

purpose such as their musical quality or cultural value or if the songs are part of an overall performance including other holiday songs relating to Chanukah, Kwanzaa, or other similar holidays.

6. Public schools may not require students to sing Christmas songs whose messages conflict with the students' own religious or nonreligious beliefs.

7. Public school students may not be prohibited from distributing literature to fellow students concerning the Christmas holiday or invitations to church Christmas events on the same terms that they would be allowed to distribute other literature that is not related to schoolwork.

8. Private citizens or groups may display crèches or other Christmas symbols in public parks subject to the same reasonable time, place, and manner restrictions that would apply to other similar displays.

9. Government entities may erect and maintain celebrations of the Christmas holiday, such as Christmas trees and Christmas light displays, and may include crèches in their displays at least so long as the purpose for including the crèche is not to promote its religious content and it is placed in context with other symbols of the Holiday season as part of an effort to celebrate the public Christmas holiday through its traditional symbols.

10. Neither public nor private employers may prevent employees from decorating their offices for Christmas, playing Christmas music, or wearing clothing related to Christmas merely because of their religious content so long

as these activities are not used to harass or intimidate others.

11. Public or private employees whose sincerely held religious beliefs require that they not work on Christmas must be reasonably accommodated by their employers unless granting the accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the employer.

12. Government recognition of Christmas as a public holiday and granting government employees a paid holiday for Christmas does not violate the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment.

For more information, email The Rutherford Institute at staff@rutherford.org.

Report from Spain

In November, the Andersons traveled to Spain to attend some special workshops sponsored by FWBIM. The two "Michigan" families enjoyed spending time together. In this photo, they are standing in front of the Alpedrete Church.



(Pictured: Debbie, Verlin, Corbin, Ana, Alejandro, Kristi, Tim)

**GRADUATION OF
THE GWEN HENDRIX
FREE WILL BAPTIST
HISPANIC
INSTITUTE**

**November 28, 2009
10:30 A. M.**

General Director Larry Powell of the National Home Missions will be the speaker at the Graduation of the Gwen Hendrix Free Will Baptist Hispanic Institute. Mr. Powell has been a Pastor, Missionary, and a Leader in the National Association of Free Will Baptists. He will also preach at the 11:00 A.M. Worship Celebration at the First Free Will Baptist Church Sunday after the Graduation November 29, 2009.

The Graduation will be at the First Free Will Baptist Church Auditorium November 28, 2009 at 10:30 A. M. There will be ten (10) Graduates that make a total of One Hundred and three (103) Graduates that has matriculated through the Institute.

The Women Active for Christ is invited as our **“Special Guest”** to the Graduation and takes the time to view the facilities. A wonderful gift was given to the Gwen Hendrix Free Will Baptist Hispanic Institute: small appliances, dishes, bed comforters, and other helpful items from the Provision Closet. Every Woman Active for Christ is invited to come and support the Gwen Hendrix Free Will Baptist Hispanic Institute.

Everyone is invited to join in this moment when we honor these students for their sacrificial commitment to finish

over eight hundred hours (800) of intense study and training. They will receive an Associate Degree in Bible. Following the graduation; Lunch will be served in the Cafeteria.

**Winter Men’s
Retreat**

January 24-26, 2010

Youth Haven Ranch

3796 Perrine Road
Rives Junction, MI 49277
Telephone: 517.569.3328

Theme: *Faithful in Suffering*

Speakers: Rev. Rick

Locklear, Rev. Rudy Shankle,
Rev. Tom McCullough, Rev.
Charles Cooper [others have
been invited]

Cost: \$100.00

Directions: Take US-127 to the Berry Road exit. Turn west and go to Churchill. Turn right and go to Perrine. Turn right on Perrine and follow to the Youth Haven Ranch entrance [about ½ mile on right].

**International Missions
Cancels Gathering**

The senior leadership of Free Will Baptist International Missions has decided to cancel the 75th anniversary Gathering in Tulsa scheduled for July 13-16, 2010. “The Gathering was planned as a reunion and celebration for all IM personnel, former personnel, and special guests,” according to James Forlines, General Director. “Although we have been planning and saving for seven years, our current financial situation makes it imprudent to continue with plans for the event.”

Gifts to International Missions in the months of August through October fell deeply below income goals, compelling the Mission to take this drastic step. “Much as it pained us, we felt we had to make this decision now,” Forlines clarified. “If trends continue, other hard decisions will have to be made.”

At this point in time, while plans may not be as extensive as initially hoped, the Mission does intend to have international guests representing all Free Will Baptist works around the world at the National Association (July 17-21). “We also anticipate hosting special events for former personnel and MKs during the convention,” Forlines proposed. “Many of our extended missionary family were eagerly looking forward to the Tulsa events and we’d like to give them a similar experience within the confines of the convention and budgetary restrictions.”

The Mission desires to host a number of commemorative and celebratory events in Oklahoma City during the annual convention should funds allow. More information will be released mid-December following the IM board meeting. “Our priority is to keep our missionaries on the field doing the work to which God has called them. We do not want to do anything to hinder their ability to serve.” General Director Forlines appealed, “Please pray with us that the Lord will give wisdom to best determine how to appropriately celebrate the 75-year anniversary of FWB overseas

**Michigan State Association
of Free Will Baptists**

37838 Hayes Road
Clinton Twp., MI 48038

church planting efforts in the
current economic crisis.”



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(minimum order - 4). Choose
your **favorite color**, your
church colors, or the color of
your favorite **sports team**. Call
the office for more information:
877-767-8039.

If you have ever been around
me more than two minutes, you
know I have two
grandchildren. Like most
babies, my 14-month-old
grandson grunts when he wants
something. While this is a very
distinct grunt, it's not very
pleasant to hear.

My daughter-in-law, a school
teacher, has been teaching him
baby sign language. I have been
amazed at how smart he is, not
that I am partial or anything. He
can sign the words eat, more,
and please, which is much
better than a grunt! Watching a
one-year-old sign has made me

stop and think about the signs
we give. When things don't go
our way do we grunt and
complain?

Over the years I haven't always
been the example I needed to
be. When the service wasn't
good at the restaurant, or the
umpire didn't get the call right
or, well . . . you know what I
mean. I may have been right,
but there was no excuse for my
actions. I think I've learned and
mellowed over the years, but I
still struggle at times.

What signs are people reading
from you? Do you point them
to Jesus, or do you give
Christianity a bad name?
During this time of the year it is
easy to become over stressed.
Be conscious of the signs you
give.
Ken

March 24-26, 2010
Deep South Golf
Tournament
George T. Bagby
State Park
Ft. Gaines, GA

Appeal to All District
Association Clerks, Board
Chairmen, and Women
Active for Christ: It is time

to update the calendar for 2010.
Please send me the dates and
locations of the District
Association Meetings, and
other events that should be on
the calendar. Email this
information to me at
gnorris101@comcast.net, or
mailing address 4166
Maplewood Meadows Avenue,
Grand Blanc, MI 48439.

The Michigan State
Association of Free Will
Baptists

May 13-15, 2010

Bavarian Inn Lodge
Frankenmuth, MI

Speaker: Dr. Tom Malone

Rooms will be reserved through
the Promotional Secretary. The
rates are \$99.95 if reserved by
April 10; \$115.95 after this
date.

There will be a pastor's &
wives banquet on Friday
afternoon at 5:00 p.m. Dr.
Milton Worthington is the
speaker.

This is an ideal location for a
mini-family vacation.

