



July 2024

I hope and pray this newsletter finds everyone healthy, spiritually growing, and firm in our Lord. BTSOP has finished her first month of the Summer Quarter. The students are now in Branson, Missouri, attending the Polishing the Pulpit Lectures. PTP is a wonderful lectureship and is an opportunity for our student body to hear many great gospel lessons, have fellowship with like-minded brethren, and witness for themselves one of many beautiful events that church members operate annually. By introducing our student bodies to these events, we have found that many continue to attend and seek encouragement and spiritual growth each year. This year, our Director, Brother Kevin Rhodes, was blessed to deliver several lessons in Branson, sit on a panel, and will be doing the same in Tennessee, August 16-22.



Caleb Griffith, Field Representative

My wife and I have finished our summer tour up north. During this time, we visited almost 15 different congregations in Michigan and Indiana, introducing them to

the school to find young men who would gladly prepare themselves to "Stand in the Gap." One of the congregations we visited is the Fort Hill church of Christ, just outside Salem, Indiana. With its rich history dating back to 1813, this congregation serves as a beacon of faith and dedication. Peter Wright established this congregation as a Free Will Baptist Church, independent of all human creeds, in 1813, and by 1819, they continued their plea to return to New Testament Christianity and became known as the Mill Creek church of Christ. They continued at that location until 1859, when they moved a couple of miles up the road and built a new building in 1860. By 1870, they dropped the name Mill Creek for Fort Hill since they built the new building about 100 yards away from a small fort built during the War of 1812 by John Wright, the brother of Peter. It was John's son, Jacob, who preached the first sermon at the new Fort Hill building in 1860, where they still worship today, left unchanged, except for the addition of electricity, heating, cooling, and plumbing.

Please be mindful of the young men in your families and congregations. We spend much time with them on sports fields and preparing them for college, while often forgetting about preparing them for the Lord's service. There is a vast preacher shortage in America today, and it's crucial that parents and congregations focus on starting their training young and pointing them to Christ and ministry.



Students - L-R - Eric Tipton, Tanner Smith

Gospel Campaign

We have slowly been preparing for our Gospel Campaign in Benton Harbor, Michigan in September. The students and I, along with several graduates of the school, will meet there on the 4th of September and knock on doors, preach, plant seeds, and pray for an increase! At this time, we are raising \$2,700.00 to offset the cost for several who are attending. The congregation in Benton Harbor is a beautiful group of people who are preparing themselves to work the town with us and preparing for all of the follow-up work that will take place once we leave. Please keep this work in your prayers; it is less than two months away!

Graduate Updates

Stephen Woods

Brother Woods is originally from the Lake Dallas congregation north of Dallas/Fort Worth. There he was raised in the church and attended Harding University to study music before coming to attend BTSOP in 2019 and graduating in 2021. He had hoped after graduation to find a Family/Youth Ministers position. Instead, he took the preaching job in Arkadelphia, Arkansas, where he labored for almost two years before he moved a little further east to work with the Highway church of Christ in Benton, Arkansas to serve as their Youth and Family Minister.

Since graduation, he has done a fabulous job. He speaks at other congregations and has taught singing seminars for local congregations. He is blessed to serve at Highway. It is a growing congregation that loves the Lord and is truth-filled with members of all ages. The congregation is seeking a pulpit minister, and Stephen is helping organize the congregation's men to fill the pulpit until the elders find the right man. Please keep Stephen in your prayers as he serves and matures into the man God desires him to be.



Adrian Sampson

Brother Adrian came to us in 2017 to study to be a gospel preacher. He is originally from East Dallas, and his family attended the Eastside congregation in Garland, Texas, where he was baptized into Christ at 13 years old. He graduated from BTSOP in December 2018.

While in school, he started dating Amanda Stevens, the daughter of Richard Stevens, who is the preacher at Beckley Heights in Dallas, and an instructor at the school. Adrian and Amanda soon decided to marry, and I was blessed to perform their wedding ceremony in a park close to downtown Fort Worth. Since then, the couple has gone on to have four boys.

After graduation, they moved to South Texas to work with the Eastside congregation in Beeville. After a couple of years there, they moved to East Texas to work with the church in Flint, near Tyler. Then, as of February 2024, he and Amanda moved to Saginaw, Texas, just a few miles from the school to serve with the church there. Since he arrived, they have baptized six into Christ and had a baptism this morning!

Brother Sampson is very grateful to be at the Saginaw congregation. He said it is a very supportive congregation that brought out the very best in him. He said it is a wonderful place where he hopes to serve for a long time.



Adrian and Amanda
Adrian Jr., Amir, Aiden, Asher

Conclusion

Please keep the school, her elders, staff, and students in your prayers. We covet them daily as we strive to produce the next generation of Gospel Preachers. We appreciate you uniting with us in this endeavor, and our hope is that God is constantly glorified through our united efforts.

Brotherly,
heath w stapleton
