#### **MISSIONS NEWS**

Bro. John Peeples Psalm 16:11

eputation and furlough are vital for a missionary. Being with many churches across the continent is an exciting time hat requires a lot of planning, effort, and expense. It is a rewarding time of making friends and partners in the ministry, raising financial support, and most importantly obtaining prayer support. Pray for these missionaries as they face daily trials and obstacles.

#### JARED AND ELIZABETH BLAIR **MISSIONARIES TO NORWAY**

Bringing Christ's Light to Norway

December 2024 / January 2025

Dear Pastor and Fellowlaborers

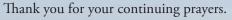
First and Foremost Happy New Year! May the Lord Bless you this year. Looking back on last year, we were blessed to travel 25,000 miles to 10 states and made many new friends while sharing our burden for Norway. We saw four salvations and five surrender to missions, including one to Norway, as well as many hearts stirred for the cause of missions. We praise the LORD for what He did in 2024.

We were so blessed to spend the Holiday Season with Jared's family. We had few meetings in November and December, including Seagoville Road Baptist Church, Lighthouse Baptist Church in Grand Prairie, and the chance to preach at Rose Avenue Baptist Church in Breckenridge, TX. We have also used this down time to refresh and reorganize for the new year's travel.

In December our car started to have some issues. It was stalling as though losing fuel. We fixed several things on it to try and alleviate it, but it eventually it died. We found a new vehicle at a good price, but had to borrow from our church and from a friend to purchase it. We will be paying that back over the course of 2025, and any assistance with this would be greatly appreciated.

In January after getting a new vehicle we have set it up for travel and gotten back to being on the road more. We were at New Life Baptist Church in Highland Village, Macedonia Baptist Church in Mesquite, Friendship Baptist Church in Mesquite, Emmanuel Baptist Church in Jacksonville, Calvary Baptist Church in Mesquite, and Victory Baptist Church in Whitehouse. It is good to be back on the

Judges 3:31 "And after him was Shamgar the son of Anath, which slew of the Philistines six hundred men with an ox goad: and he also delivered Israel." We are one month in. You might wonder why I chose this verse. Well in all the craziness that is the book of Judges we get one verse on the Judge Shamgar. One verse, and all we get is he obeyed God and delivered Israel. With all the mess ups we see in scripture I'd rather be like this man and have one verse to say I did as I was supposed to then the many that tell of failure. Let's live the rest of this year trying to just do as God commands and follow him fully and be delivered from evil.



ared and Elizabeth Blair



#### Our Prayer Needs:

-Please pray as we schedule more meetings.

-Pray for wisdom for us as we ontinue to work on Visa

-Pray for travel safety.

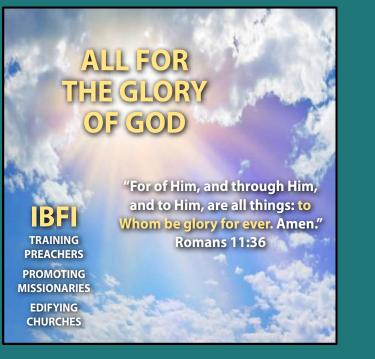
#### INDEPENDENT BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL

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#### The Searchlight

A publication and ministry of the Independent Baptist Fellowship International PO Box 151259 | Ft. Worth, TX 76108 | Phone: 817.367.3422 | Email: ibfi@ibfi.us | Website: ibfi.us Pastor Matthew Gage, Pastor Tyler Gillit, Pastor David Grice, Pastor Heath Hogue, Pastor Paul Shearin, Pastor Caleb Shipman, Evangelist Claude Sutton

Pastor Heath Van Zandt, Pastor David Webb, and Pastor Michael Wiggins.

INDEPENDENT BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL

# The earchlight

### 41st IBFI Annual May Fellowship Meeting Monday Evening-Thursday Noon • May 19-22, 2025

"FOR OF HIM, AND THROUGH HIM, AND TO HIM, ARE ALL THINGS: TO WHOM BE GLORY FOR EVER. AMEN." ROMANS 11:36 (4900 Campus Drive, Ft. Worth, TX)

At the Worth Baptist Church

Starts Monday Night at 5:30 with BBQ Banquet & Guest Preacher Dean Miller

TUESDAY 9 AM - NOON 7:00 PM NBBS Graduation	Pastor 7yler Gillit Worth Baptist	Pastor Jerry Siler Cornerstone Baptist	Pastor Deau Miller Front Range Baptist	Evan Jonath Steun Victory Baptist Chu
	Church, Fort Worth, TX	Temple, Dayton, OH	Church, Fort Collins, CO	Weatherford, TX
WEDNESDAY 9 AM - NOON 7:00 PM Evening Service at Worth Baptist Church	Pastor Charles Pugh First Baptist Church of Cottondale, Paradise, TX	Pastor Eric Crawford Heritage Baptist Church, Haslet, TX	General Assembly NBBS Update Special Offering Business Session Elections	Mission Gare Blac Norw Dr. Raym W. Ba
<u>THURSDAY</u> 9 AM - NOON	Pastor David Grice  Lighthouse Baptist Church, Grand Prairie, TX	Pastor Cody Jones Washington St. Baptist Church, Stephenville, TX	Evang. Charles Wetherbee  Victory Baptist Church, Weatherford, TX	\$75,000 OFFERING GOAL
Parks .	CORR BILL SOFT MANUEL			

We Are Now Underway in Our Building Program • Details Inside!

FROM THE PEN OF THE PRESIDENT • NEWS & EVENTS • SCHOOL, MISSIONS & ALUMNI NEWS



To date we have reported to thirty-three churches, located in Texas, the midwest, the northeast, and the east coast. We are now begin

MISSIONS NEWS (CONTINUED)

**JOHN AND NEILA YELLE** 

MISSIONARIES TO BRAZII

News from Caxias do Sul,



loe have left to the glory of God!



Please remember in prayer the following:

- Funds raised for our camp ministry facilities

Continued safety in our travels

- Wisdom for the Bennetts as

they lead in the work in Caxias do Sul

- Bro. Jeremy Bennett's proficiency in the Portuguese language

#### THE DEITY OF CHRIST CONFIRMED



(Excerpt from the book by Raymond W. Barber: What the Bible Teaches)

I Timothy 3:16

## Dr. Raymond Barber

Hebrews 1:8. He is called the "Son of the living God" in Matthew born, sinless, perfect Son of the living God. 16:16. He is called the "Lord" in Acts 16:31.

Him. Men and angels worship Him. Let me read it to you from the sins." If He were not the divine Son of God, His death would be Revelation, chapter 5, verses 11 and 12:

throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten cross. Peter said in his first epistle, chapter 2, "Who his own self bare our thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands

Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and The sixth outstanding fact that confirms His deity is His glorious

And I read in Philippians chapter 2:

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a 14 (Vss. 1-3): servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

which is above every name:

things in earth, and things under the earth;

And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory — of God the Father."

Men everywhere one day shall worship Him when the angels fall down before Him ascribing to Him all majesty and glory and might and power and wisdom from every tribe on this terrestrial globe. Out of every kindred on the earth shall men come to pay honor to Him. Bless His wonderful name! Love Him? Yes! Adore Him? Yes! Worship Him? Yes! Crown Him Lord of all? Yes! Bring forth the royal diadem,

The third fact that confirms His deity is His equality with the **Father.** In John, chapter 5, He is seen as being equal with the Father in working, in wisdom, in His power to resurrect the dead, in His authority to judge, in His position of honor, and in His ability to give Conference is just around the corner, and I hope you are making life. He is equal with the Father.

The fourth great fact that confirms His deity is His virgin birth. In Genesis 3:15 it is prophesied that the Seed of the woman would bruise the head of Satan, the serpent. The old rabbi used to wonder about that verse. The Seed of the woman? Unheard of! The seed comes from the man. But the 750 years before Christ was born, Isaiah took the fences are in place, and dirt work will begin very soon. This will get prophetic pen in hand and wrote, "The Lord himself shall give you a the ball rolling, and the project should progress much faster. Our sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his hope is that we would be in the new building in the summer of name Immanuel," which means "God with us." In Luke 1:35 when the angel made the announcement to Mary, he said,

"And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore

The virgin birth is the most important doctrine that supports the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ. The deity of Christ is the doctrine upon which all other doctrines fall or stand.

If Jesus Christ be born not of a virgin, there is no Trinity; for He is the second Person of the Trinity. If Jesus Christ be not born of a virgin, there is no resurrection; for He is the resurrection. If Jesus Christ be not born of a virgin, Christianity is only a myth that will in the end succumb to its own deception and be buried beneath the ashes of its own presumption.

Jesus Christ was virgin born. It matters not what all the infidels and agnostics and unbelievers and college professors and "baboon chasers" and D.D.'s and Ph.D.'s and everybody else says, I believe He was born of a The deity of Christ is confirmed in seven basic ways. First, His deity virgin because the Bible says so. I believe He was born of a virgin because is confirmed by the names given Him. He is called "God" in He lives in my heart. I believe! I believe! I believe that Christ is the virgin

The fifth fact that confirms HIs deity is His sacrificial death upon the Second, His deity is confirmed by the worship that is ascribed to cross. I read in I Corinthians, chapter 15 and verse 3: "Christ died for our meaningless. His death would mean no more than your death. He must "And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the be, and He is, the Son of God because He died a sacrificial death upon the sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed."

> resurrection from among the dead. I read in Romans 1:4 that He is declared the Son of God by the resurrection from the dead. Before Christ there was no resurrection. Until Christ comes again, there shall not be any resurrection; for He is the resurrection and the life.

Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with The seventh fact that confirms His deity is His triumphant return. Sweeter words were never spoken than these from John's Gospel, chapter

Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and The deity of the Lord Jesus is the central thought and the central fiber and

# **GAINING GROUND**

Eric Crawford 3FI President

Time flies by so fast, and now spring is here. Even in Texas, the grass is turning green, and flowers are blooming. Our May plans to attend and are bringing an offering with you. **Our goal is** \$75,000, a goal that we have surpassed the past three years!

The new building is progressing. We have our grading permit, silt **2026.** I hope you will put the Norris building project on your prayer list if you have not done so already. Please pray that we would have smooth waters going forward. What a wonderful tool also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son this building will be for training the next generation in the service

#### "WE" HAVE DONE IT AGAIN!



Philippians 2:13

Ionathan I. Stewart VBBS President

By the grace of God, and the good graces of the Worth Bapti Church, her staff, and pastor, "we" - as in God, and as in IBFI and he ultimately plans to pastor. Having been exposed as a supporting churches, NBBS faculty, and administration - have **done it again!** We are adding seven more to our now forty-one year total of graduates!

You may have heard of the elephant and the mouse, who were good friends, and how one day "they" crossed over a wide river on a sufficiently sturdy but still somewhat loose suspension bridge Once across, the mouse – who was riding atop the large elephant looked back and saw how the bridge was still swinging back and forth, and proclaimed, "My, look what **we** did!"

Of course, we know who made the bridge to sway, and who is represented by the mouse in the story. We also know who really gets the credit for another successful year at NBBS – the Spirit of the Lord working with us (Mark 16:20c) and "in us" all (Philippians 2:3), and through us!

"For **of** Him, and **through** Him, and **to** Him, are all thing to Whom be glory for ever. Amen." Romans 11:36

#### **Our Graduates!**

Felicia Dale Blackburn is a member of Worth Baptist Church. She initially enrolled in NBBS to not only get a better grasp of the Scriptures in general, but she came to also further equip herself to teach children the truths of the Bible, something in which she was already involved at her church. While studying at



NBBS, she continued to be faithful in her church and thereby far beyond what I ever thought possible." growing under the combined teaching and preaching ministry of both institutions, she came to be further burdened for missions. This is an area of ministry she hopes to be more led into in the near future. She is graduating with a One-Year Bible Diploma. This diploma is a 36 credit hour course of study made up of 12 different Bible and doctrinal courses, as well as some practical courses. When asked what NBBS means to her, she wrote: "My school has served as a tremendous instrument in ways I was not planning. God has used the instructors, staff, and my classmates in a beautiful way in my life. Learning and growing with these people, that I now call my NBBS family, has been a wonderful opportunity and a privilege. Without NBBS I would not have known the calling of my heart, which is missions."



**Ryan B. Blair** is the son of Pastor Roy Blair of the First Baptist Church of Meadowview, Mesquite, Texas. He is married to Rachel, and he is graduating rom NBBS with an Associate's Degree. This degree is a 72 credit hour course of study in 24 Bible, doctrine, and church ministry classes. Ryan is 30 years of age,

preachers's son to different potential sources for ministerial training, when asked what NBBS means to him, he wrote that he feels it excels in the training of preachers in keeping with his other educational involvements. A few of his comments were as such: "NBBS has created an environment that allows one to study his Bible in an academic setting, but also pushes one to have an actual walk with Christ. My life was not on hold as I studied, and my time at Norris amplified my personal walk and my ministry at FBC of

Ray E. Caudle III is married to Rachel Caudle, and is the vouth director at the Countryside Baptist Church, Mansfield Texas. It is the church he grew up in, and the one in which he was called to preach under the ministry of Pastor Claude Sutton, who is also longstandir instructor at NBBS. Rachel, his wife, in

the recent past earned a one-year Bible



auto technician (mechanic) for nine years, and was able to take four courses a week because of the NBBS double-lecture on the same day course strategy. Hence it took him longer than four years to earn his degree, but he was active in ministry throughout his schooling. Ray is 28 years of age and is graduating with a Bachelor's Degree with a Bible Major and a Pastoral Minor. This degree is a 144 credit hour course of study in 48 classes. Ray, among many positive things he had to say about NBBS, was how being taught in depth on each book of the Bible was so helpful and that the faculty is so committed to preparing the students for the ministry. He also wrote these words: "This school, with the working of the Holy Spirit, has grounded me in the faith and helped me to grow

**Diploma from NBBS.** They have three children. He has been an



Elisabeth Roberta Day is the wife of Isaac Day (a May 2024, NBBS graduate). hey met at NBBS, and were married this past year. She assists her husband in youth ministry at Santa Fe Baptist Church, Weatherford, Texas, where he is the youth director. Elisabeth was a very good student and a joy to have in school. She

was a ready help in straightening up the chapel area and classrooms after their use for the day, as well as a help in other ways to the administration. She has earned from NBBS an Associate's Degree. This degree is a 72 credit hour, 24 course study in Bible, doctrine, and church ministry classes. She is planning on returning to NBBS in the future to pursue a Bachelor's degree.



him for the ministry.

aforementioned museum.

these lines at his church, but also at NBBS when we were in our

previous facility. Brian had attended two other schools to prepare

for the ministry, but when he learned of NBBS, he came our way

Brian and his wife Denise have been out in the forefront in the

seminary's involvement at the Creation Evidence Museum of Glen

Rose, Texas. On one excavation along the Paluxy River – which the

NBBS student body carried out under the auspices of the museum

a couple of years ago – Brian, his wife, and Isaac Day uncovered

tracks that have been determined to be those of a creature in the

pterosaur classification of flying reptiles of the past. The size of the

tracks indicate a creature with a thirty foot or more wingspan. A

graduating with a Bachelor's Degree with a Bible Major and a

Pastoral Minor. This degree is a 144 credit hour course of study

in 48 classes. He is planning ultimately to go into the field of

evangelism. When asked to share what NBBS has meant to him,

he wrote among many things, "Going to Norris was the greatest

in having his footing secure in the basics of the Bible. I remember

well his early sharpness that was readily evident in class discussions

in his first year in classes. Knowing that he was only recently saved

at that time, it evidenced a young man whose heart the Lord had

been stirring. At the church in Boyd he soon had the ministry of

teaching in and overseeing the children's ministry. He has

continued to grow in his walk and is now 24 years of age and is

graduating with a Bachelor's Degree with a Bible Major and a

Pastoral Minor. This degree is a 144 credit hour course of study

in 48 classes. Damian plans to be a pastor. A statement from his

personal words about NBBS included the following: "Since coming

to this school I have learned in-depth about every subject of the Bible

I have greatly grown in my grasp of the truths of God's Word from the

Mark "Damian" Lee Gonzalez was saved

who is seeking God's will for a life of ministry."

sensed the call to preach. He became an

active member of Friendship Bapti

Church, Boyd, Texas, under the pastorat

of alumnus Terry Terry, and began his

schooling at NBBS. He came with wha

could be described as a good running start

teaching of all the preachers and their wives.

educational decision I have ever made and I recommend it to anyone

Brian K. Dull was called to the ministry Gary Paul Norris was called into the while a member at Hickory Creek Baptist ministry while at Hickory Creek Baptist Church, Denton, Texas, where Raymond Church, Denton, Texas, where Raymond Castro is the pastor. He has served as the Castro is the pastor. While attending youth director and in various other areas NBBS and after serving there in various of ministry in his church. He is a capacities, he left with his pastor's blessing to help alumnus Heath Van Zandt with a 🌠 church plant in Rhome, Texas. He is now 🕥

the Associate Pastor. The church has been established and is housed in a very nice facility that is their own. Prior to all of this, Gary was in the U.S. Navy from 1989-1999, where he ultimately served as a Hospitalman 2nd Class Petty Officer. Afterwards he acquired a Bachelor's of Business Administration and an MBA with Health and found it to especially be what he was looking for to prepare

Service Management, both from the University of North Texas. Besides the medical field, Gary was employed at Continental Airlines for many years in the area of customer service and is now with American Airlines. He has become a good conversationalist because of this. Gary is not only a capable song leader, but he is also a very soul-conscious and adept witness for Christ. He is not only such out of a burden for the lost, but also through his dealing with the public in keeping with the nature of his occupations. He is 54 years of age, and is married to Trina, and they have two older teenage sons. He is graduating with a Bachelor's Degree with a Bible Major and a Pastoral Minor. This degree is a 144 credit several foot long imprint of the trail now hangs on a wall in the hour course of study in 48 classes. Gary had these words to say, "At NBBS we see God take men of all ages and backgrounds and transform them from being ordinary men to being extraordinary servant leaders The Dulls have five adult children. Brian is 56 years of age and is for Christ.

#### We are Underway!

In the fall of 2022, when we were on the verge of closing on the sale of the property, the interest rates across the nation went up to the degree that it forced our buyer to seek out a secondary loan to fulfill the sales price we had agreed upon. It took them several months to do so. We were able to close in August of 2023. For the next year, we began the work of getting our plans finalized and submitted to the city. Now with our grading permit in hand, the water tap having been made, the silt fence put in place, the trees marked that are to remain, we are now preparing for the excavation! Trees that were to be removed have been taken out, and the layout of the entryway, parking lot, and the building is about to be staked out. It now appears we will be completed with the construction in time for the fall classes one year from now!







#### **ALUMNI NEWS**



Heath Hogue Alumni President

It is May, and another graduation is upon us! Every year, we come together to fellowship and honor the new graduating class. It stirs up

memories of our own years at the Norris Bible Seminary and the excitement of our own graduation, and that thrill of finishing! On graduation night these new graduates will feel that same feeling. Finished! But as you know, it's just the start. In Philippians 1:6 we read, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:" Graduates, as you "finish," you are just beginning. Stay faithful, stay focused, and follow the Lord's leading throughout your ministry.

Following the business meeting on Wednesday, May 21, there will be an alumni luncheon. All are invited, but I want to especially encourage the alumni of the Norris Bible Baptist Seminary to attend. It is refreshing to be able to talk with others in a more relaxed atmosphere.

Each quarter, I want to take a few moments to highlight a graduate

of the Norris Seminary. I really would like to hear from you and your ministry. Email me at **norrisalumni@gmail.com** a few notes of your testimony and what is going on in your ministry, or you can call me. This quarter, I reached out to Bro. Bill Keisling who earned a one year Bible diploma while pastoring Fort Victory Baptist Church in Crowley, Texas in 2018. Bro. Keisling surrendered to preach in 1974, and followed the Lord (and the U.S. Military) until 1986, starting three churches in Germany and was a youth director in Killeen, Texas. After leaving the military, Bro Bill pastored in Georgia, before moving to Texas and starting a church in Gun Barrell City. Then in 2015, Bro. Keisling was called to pastor Fort Victory Baptist Church. He has been the pastor there for ten years and has seen growth, salvations, and baptisms. They just finished

a complete remodel of the sanctuary and fellowship hall.

HOTEL INFORMATION

#### **FORT WORTH**

Holiday Inn Express & Suites 3550 SE Loop 820 Forest Hill, TX 76140 (817) 775-0357

Best Western Inn & Suites 3230 Forest Hill Cir Fort Worth, TX 76140 (817) 293-1667

#### **BURLESON**

Home2 Suites by Hilton 13233 Jake Ct Burleson, TX 76028 (682) 255-6888

Holiday Inn Express & Suites Burleson, TX 76028 (817) 426-0396

(817) 295-2727

#### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

#### **IBFI MAY FELLOWSHIP MEETING**

Monday - Wednesday May 19-22, 2025 Worth Baptist Church Fort Worth, TX Host Pastor - Tyler Gillit

#### MAY FELLOWSHIP ACTIVITIES

Fellowship Service. Our annual fellowship dinner, eginning at 5:30 P.M. will be held before the services which will begin at 7:00 P.M. Tuesday afternoon there will be a board meeting

Monday evening will be the J. Frank Norris

:00 P.M. Afterwards, we will have a small reception to

make plans to attend.

held at 1:00 P.M. A lite lunch will be served for the board members and their wives. Graduation services will be Tuesday evening at

honor our graduates and their families. Wednesday at noon we will have our Annual **Alumni Luncheon.** Everyone is invited, please

The Wednesday evening services will be held at the Worth Baptist Church in Fort Worth, TX.

Thursday morning will be the final charge for "All for the Glory of God!"

Nursery will be provided for all services.

#### **MISSION STORE 2025**

ease do not forget our **annual Mission Store.** Gift cards are lways accepted, as well as new, unused items. **This is a great** plessing to our IBFI missionaries, and they are always rateful for your giving. If you have any questions, please feel ree to call Shirley Peeples at the Mission Office at 817-367-3422 ext. 101.

#### **ELECTION INFORMATION**

The following board members will have served for three years and WILL NOT be eligible to serve this year:

CLAUDE SUTTON MATTHEW GAGE HEATH VAN ZANDT

Hampton Inn & Suites Burleson, TX 76028

We will be voting at the General Assembly meeting on Wednesday morning at 11:00 A.M. Please come prepared to vote and to serve because each

office is important.