



# TheVision

THEVISION

# Leo Martin Mission Fundraiser

The Social Band District held their annual Leo Martin World Missions 5k Run/Walk at Stewart Park in Walnut Ridge on October 28, 2023. Corporate sponsors and people of all ages participated, making it a fun day and a big success! The total raised for world missions was **\$8,624**.

There were participants of all ages:



# ACTS 1:8 Missionaries Speak Out!

**ARKANSAS SUPPORTERS: *You make a difference!***

A quick dictionary search reveals that the phrase **make a difference** means “to be important, to do something that helps people or makes the world a better place.” We asked some of the missionaries from Arkansas how **YOU** have made a difference in their ministries. Here are their answers to how you have done something important and you’ve made the world a better place:

**Daniel and Karah** (Spain): “Arkansas supporters have made a difference in our ministry by partnering with us financially, praying for us, hosting us in their houses or churches, and by faithfully giving to the Acts 1:8 plan.”

**Anthony and Lea Edgmon** (Spain): “Arkansas supporters have made a difference in our ministry by being FAITHFUL to come alongside us not only through prayer and financial support during the last 25 years we’ve been in Spain, but also sending groups to help us, providing ETEAM leaders, responding to our updates with encouraging words and even before that...investing in formative years of my life as a child.”

**Hannah Goucher** (Japan): “Arkansas supporters have made a difference in my ministry by providing many different opportunities for the message of hope to be shared with those that are hurting through prayer and financial support!”

**Keren Delgado** (Spain): “Arkansas supporters have made a difference in my ministry by faithfully praying and giving so that together we can obey God’s command in telling those in Spain the reason for the hope we have.”

**Shane and Joy** (France): “Arkansas supporters have made a difference in our ministry by allowing us to tell people in southern France who do not know who Jesus really is that He is their Creator, and He loves them. Thank you!”

**Daniel and Kate Speer** (Japan): “Arkansas supporters have made a difference in our ministry by being a constant source of encouragement to our family.”

**Abby Walker** (Japan): “Arkansas supporters have made a difference in my ministry by giving, praying, and encouraging me, which has allowed me to see and be a part of the many ways God is moving in Tokorozawa, Japan!”

## ACTS 1:8

Thank you for your continued  
and generous support of missions  
through our ACTS 1:8 program.

***December / January  
Receipts***

**\$69,396.08**

**FOLLOW ME**  
**MATT. 4:18-22**

# State

# CTS Expo

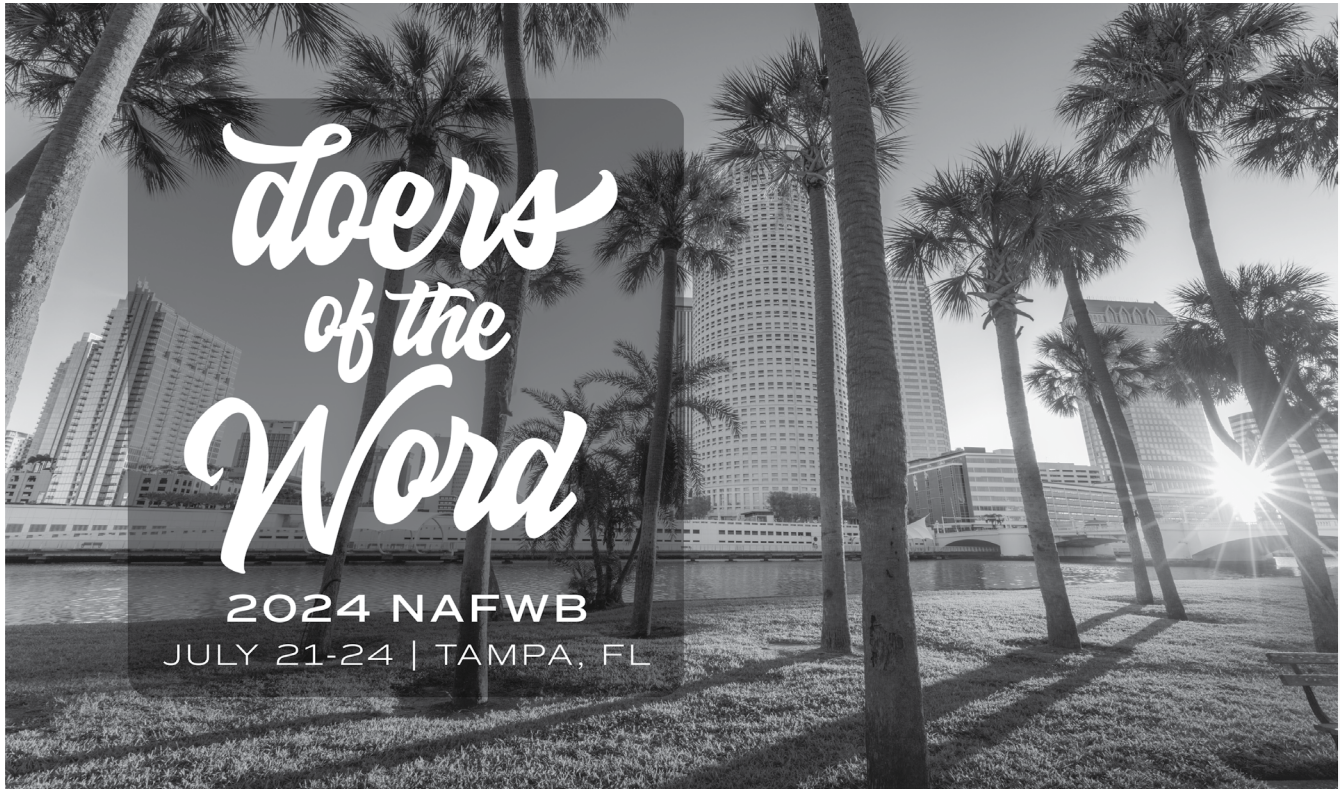
Arkansas

Saturday, April 27, 2024

First FWB Church, North Little Rock  
2001 Parkway Dr.  
North Little Rock, AR 72118

*All entries due by April 1*

[arstudentmin.org/statects](http://arstudentmin.org/statects)



# doers of the Word

2024 NAFWB  
JULY 21-24 | TAMPA, FL



**start**  
leadership challenge

**APPLICATIONS OPEN  
NOVEMBER 1, 2023**

[www.arstudentmin.org](http://www.arstudentmin.org)



# Tentative State Calendar 2024

## *March*

- 1-2 Teen Retreat, Camp Beaverfork
- 9 The Gathering (AWM)
- 10 Daylight Saving Time Begins
- 29 Good Friday (State Office Closed)
- 31 Easter Sunday

## *April*

- 1 Pre-registration for State Meeting opens
- 1 State CTS Expo entry deadline
- 27 State CTS Expo, First FWB, N. Little Rock

## *May*

- 20-21 ARFWB State Meeting
- 27 Memorial Day (State Office Closed)

## *June*

- 2-7 Teen Camp
- 9-14 Jr. High Camp
- 16-22 Kids Camp (split week)

## *July*

- 4 Independence Day (State Office Closed)
- 21-24 NAFWB Convention, Tampa, FL

## *August*

- 16-17 Evangelism Conference (Missouri)

## *September*

- 2 Labor Day (State Office Closed)
- 16-18 Ministers Retreat, DeGray Lake Resort
- 20-21 AWM Retreat, Camp Beaverfork

## *October*

- 7-8 Theological Symposium, Welch College

## *November*

- 3 Daylight Saving Time Ends
- 28 Thanksgiving Day (State Office Closed)

## *December*

- 25 Christmas Day (State Office Closed)

## Arkansas State Meeting

Mark your calendar and plan on attending the **May 20-21**, 2024 State Meeting. It will be held at Camp Beaverfork in Conway.

**Hotel information** will be in the May-June VISION, as well as on the State website (in April).

**Pre-registration** will open on April 1st on the State website ([www.arfwb.org](http://www.arfwb.org)). Again this year, a promotional gift will be given to all who pre-register and attend the meeting.

The **Nomination Schedule**, **2025 budget proposals**, and **board reports** will be on the State website in April. A state-wide email will be sent out when these are posted on the website.

Final registration numbers for our 2023 State Meeting came in at 163. We look forward to 2024's attendance to exceed that number. There's a seat waiting for you!

## Pulpit Vacancies

The following churches are searching for a pastor:

- CenterPoint FWB Church, Vilonia
- Chester FWB Church, Chester
- Corbin Ferry FWB Church, Lake Providence
- Daisy FWB Church, Kirby
- First FWB Church, Greenwood
- First FWB Church, Newport
- Huntsville FWB Church, Huntsville
- Oak Grove FWB Church, Eaton
- Woodlawn FWB Church, Russellville

## 2024 ARFWB Nomination Schedule

<b>Position</b>	<b>Term Ending</b>	<b>2023 Nominating Committee</b>
<u>Executive Board</u> Jason Sullivan* Randall Ray	<b>2027</b>	Nominations to be submitted by the Nominating Committee to the State Association will be printed in the May - June VISION.
<u>Mission Board</u> Tim Forman* Larry Little	<b>2027</b>	The schedule in the column to the left shows the positions to be filled.  Nominations from the floor may be made during the State Meeting.
<u>ASM Board</u> Andy Haskins* Daniel Young*	<b>2027</b>	
<u>CEM Board</u> Jason Nichols* Greg Tucker	<b>2027</b>	<b>2023 Nomination Committee</b>  Andy Haskins, Chair Kim Landers Larry Little Ronnie Garrett Doug Jones
<u>AWM Board</u> Melissa Haralson April Sullivan	<b>2027</b>	
<u>Randall University Trustee</u> Jason Nichols	<b>2026</b>	*ineligible for reelection
<u>FWB Family Ministries Trustee</u> Johnny Miller	<b>2027</b>	
<u>State Officers</u>		
<i>Moderator</i> Tim Landers		
<i>Assistant Moderator</i> Kevin Barnett		
<i>Clerk</i> Amy Fitzgerald		
<i>Assistant Clerk</i> Ben Campbell		

## Home With the Lord

Jimmy "Jim" Ray Spurlock, 84, formerly of Huntsville, passed away on Tuesday, November 28, 2023, at Westwood Health and Rehab in Springdale. Jim was born on August 11, 1939, in Huntsville, Arkansas to Floyd James Spurlock and Naomi Elizabeth (Fredrick) Spurlock. He served in the US Army and spend 53 years pastoring numerous Free Will Baptist church throughout Northwest Arkansas. He retired from Standard Register as a machine operator.

Jim is preceded in death by his parents; wife of 58 years, Shirley (Thomas) Spurlock; and one daughter, Kim Burris.

He is survived by his son, Brad Spurlock of Tontitown; sister, Joetta Copeland of Fayetteville; brother, Jerry Spurlock, and wife Pat of Green Forest, and three grandchildren--Grayson Spurlock, Chris Burris, and Conner Burris and wife Shaea.



## Youngs Children's Home

Deborah Christian, Administrator of the **Youngs Children's Home** in Ft. Smith would like to announce an opening at the Young Children's Home for someone interested in serving as a home parent.

There also continues to be a need for loving Christian families interested in being foster parents. All the training necessary to serve at the Young Children's Home is provided. Also, they also offer support and case management services during the course of one's foster care journey.

This is one of three child care facilities in Arkansas that are part of Free Will Baptist Family Ministries.

If you are interested, or know someone who might be, please contact Deborah at,

Young Children's Home  
881 Young Home Drive  
Ft. Smith, AR 72961  
479.755.6513

A graphic with a light gray background and a white grid pattern. The text is centered and reads: "WHAT DO YOU REALLY KNOW ABOUT YOUR NEIGHBORS?" in all caps. Below this, the words "know your community" are written in a large, lowercase, sans-serif font. The letter "o" in "community" is replaced by a location pin icon with a heart inside. At the bottom, it says "IN PARTNERSHIP WITH CHURCH ANSWERS" in all caps.



# Post-Pandemic Ministry: 5 Considerations for Small Groups

by Benjamin G. Campbell

There is no question that the landscape of ministry in the local church has changed since the COVID-19 pandemic. Since then, churches across the world struggle to recover from closures, social distancing, and fear. The constant back-and-forth is enough to wear out pastors in the everyday life of ministry, but a global pandemic only accelerates the imminent need for a change in ministry. Perhaps a change is necessary, and the only way to achieve such a change in the American church is a virus which shut down the world for months.

Before offering some considerations, a definition and purpose of small groups is, indeed, appropriate. However, I do want to clarify my position regarding the ministry of small groups from the onset: *small group discipleship should never replace the local church gathering of believers*. Why should I make such a bold claim?

First and foremost, the priority of the local church is to gather as *one body*, as I believe the Holy Scriptures and the Protestant, ecumenical creeds propose for us. Second, it is all too easy to get caught up in ministry programs that we miss the people to whom we minister. Third, our fleshly desire for numbers and growth can distract us from our true, biblically warranted purpose. Finally, it is important to put in place ministries that place value on the Word of God permeating the hearts of our congregants.

In this cultural moment, secular business marketing models have invaded ministry activities in such a way that many have diverted from biblical ministry practice. Therefore, before diving directly into considering small groups, a definition of terms is necessary.

## What are Small Groups?

I believe that a small group is *a group of 10-12 people gathering in a place other than the local church for Bible study, spiritual formation, and fellowship*. As you can see, this specific ministry in the local church is not complicated. Discipleship comes in many forms in the local church, but intergenerational relationships do not--they must be intentionally produced--which is likewise a wonderfully biblical purpose of small groups.

Free Will Baptists have affirmed Deuteronomy 6:4-9 for decades, but it is helpful to emphasize 6:20-25 which God commanded Israel to *tell the stories of the Exodus to children and grandchildren*. While the immediate context of Deuteronomy 6 is for families, there is also a connection to the local church where those without spiritually aware parents and grandparents could learn from the older generations of the local church. Small groups encourage these relationships to form organically.

## 5 Considerations.

While there are more than five considerations, space does not permit. Also, I pray these considerations will do more than convince you to “rethink” ministry of “change” a method, but push you to making Holy Scripture the reason for your ministry in the local church.

*First, consider the value of entrusting the gospel to your congregation*. Holy Scripture describes the church as the means by which God entrusts His Word to His people (1 Timothy 4:13). Therefore, the Bible must be the reason we exist and the means by which we minister. May it never be said of any church associated with Arkansas Free Will Baptists that we have forgotten our purpose--to entrust the Word of God to the people of God for the glory of God. So, while all other ministries like small groups or discipleship groups, or even similar ministries are all good and worthy causes to which we devote our lives and efforts, they *must never take precedence over the entrusting of Holy Scripture to God's people*. Churches are called and exhorted to let the Word dwell in us richly (Colossians 3:16). Therefore, it is imperative to never forget our highest priority--entrusting the Word to God's people.

*Second, consider the purpose of the church*. Jonathan Leeman proposes that the narrow purpose of the church is to “make disciples and citizens of Christ's kingdom.”<sup>1</sup> If the church of Jesus Christ is a “chosen

(continued on next page)

(Small Groups continued)

race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession" (1 Peter 2:9), then it follows that the church must be witnesses of the gospel in a world that opposes light and truth. Perhaps it is important to remind our people that we are to show the beauty and truth of the gospel in all facets of life. We gather to remind ourselves of these truth so we can be salt and light throughout the week.

*Third, consider the necessary changes for ministry moving forward.* While most of us (myself included) can be averse to change at times, the necessity to change is pertinent.. If we want to do ministry by the book, we must continue to renew and reform our methods for the advancement of the kingdom of Christ. Change is not always necessary but is always worth consideration. The harsh reality is that change can be good; it is not always a bad thing. The pandemic forced change upon us all, and I've yet to know of a pastor explain the changes as a negative, when in reality small groups could be the avenue for moving ministry forward.

*Fourth, consider the importance of intergenerational relationships.* Studies show that children need three influential relationship other than their parents to help them follow Christ during their childhood and adolescent years. Also, it is no secret that teenagers are leaving the church in droves once they graduate high school, so these relationships are vital for many reasons, including spiritual growth. If there was one main takeaway other than spiritual growth of the local church for implementing small groups, I would propose it be the newly formed relationships that occur within a small group. As a parent, it would thrill my heart and soul to see someone in the local church spiritually invest in my children. Also, consider the unity it will form as these relationships build and grow as children AND adults gather to study the Word and fellowship with one another.

*Fifth and finally, consider the importance of fellowship.* The early church in Acts prioritized fellowship and the breaking of bread, as well as teaching and prayer (Acts 2:42). We don't practice all things in the same way as the first century church--they met daily with each other, but we can model our ministries after their habits and devotion. A church that is unified is a church that experiences deep, intimate fellowship with one another.

### **Conclusion.**

While there are many more reasons as to why small groups could benefit your local church, the most important reasons are discipleship, spiritual formation, and fellowship. Most importantly, we see the Lord Jesus having his own small group in discipling the three--Peter, James, and John. These groups are not used to make cliques within the church or to create our own little churches within the larger church. This ministry is to equip the local church to be a gospel witness in their everyday life. It is to make ministry more personal to make Jesus more known among our people. But, most of all, our jobs are to plant and water those seeds of the gospel in our people, and to allow God to do His work by His Spirit (1 Corinthians 3:6)--grow our people into the image of Jesus Christ for His glory and their good.

---

1 Jonathan Leeman, "The Church Has Two Missions: Narrow and Broad" *9 Marks*, November 6, 2017, accessed April 11, 2023, <https://www.9marks.org/article/the-church-has-two-missions-narrow-and-broad/>.

#### **About the writer:**

Ben currently serves as Director of Ministries and Administration at First FWB Church, Walnut Ridge, Arkansas. He is completing his eleventh year of pastoral ministry, having graduated from Welch College (B.S. and M.A.), and Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (M.Div.). He is currently pursuing a Masters of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling from Houston Christian University.

When not in the office, Ben enjoys a good cup of coffee, golfing, writing, and spending time with his family.

## Cooperative Receipts -- December 2023 & January 2024

Allen Chapel	2,560.00	Generations Church		Welcome Home	268.32
Arbor Grove	677.96	Grace Fellowship	85.00	West Ridge	
Ballews Chapel	2,351.00	Harmony, Russellville		Willoughby	
Bethlehem	3,573.32	Harmony, Warren		Woodlawn	1,637.00
Blackland Chapel	1,861.20	Hector		Yorktown	
Calvary	1,638.00	Hillview			
Cavanaugh	23,011.08	Kenner Chapel	1,288.02		
Center Point, Vilonia	1,464.72	Lake Hills	949.57	<b>Individual Giving:</b>	
Centerville		Lodi	419.05	Cornerstone	2,937.00
Central, Central City	582.22	Macedonia, Mt. Pleasant		Doug Harris	300.00
Chapel Lane	176.85	Macedonia, New Edinburg			
Clifty Chapel		Maple	9,000.00		
Connect Church	2,246.22	Mt. Bethel	3,606.81		
Corbin Ferry		Mt. Harmony, Saffell	1,716.00		
Corley		Mt. Olivet		<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>\$127,064.23</b>
Crossroads, Jacksonville	1,930.17	Mt. Pleasant, Hamburg			
Daisy	1,336.71	Mt. Vernon	400.00		
Danville		Mt. View, Charleston			
Eighty-Eight, Rudy	250.00	New Bethel	200.00		
Enterprise	1,149.55	New Sulphur	170.55		
Fairview, Warren		Oak Grove, Atkins	183.20		
Faith, Jonesboro	2,005.00	Oak Grove, Wilmar			
Faith, Warren		Old Reyno	1,543.00		
First Benton		Oliver Springs	3,017.21		
First Cave City	100.00	Ozark			
First Charleston	1,500.30	Phillips Chapel	1,666.66		
First Conway	69.75	Plainview			
First Crossett		Pleasant Valley			
First Dardanelle	250.00	Ranger			
First Fort Smith		Riverdale			
First Greenwood	6,643.40	Rolling Oaks	1,200.00		
First Hot Springs	90.00	Rose Hill			
First Jonesboro	2,500.00	Sharon	1,402.60		
First Malvern	420.75	Slaty Crossing	400.00		
First Mt. Home		South Heights	654.00		
First Mulberry	2,291.00	South Side			
First North Little Rock	1,787.35	Spring Hill			
First Pocahontas	2,075.29	St. Joe	525.70		
First Star City		Sutton	16,125.91		
First Tuckerman	2,237.70	Union Grove	2,067.28		
First Walnut Ridge	4,487.22	United	2,053.28		
First Warren		Upper Spring Creek			
Friendship	897.11	Weavers Chapel	1,084.20		

Arkansas  
Free Will Baptists  
PO Box 2110  
Conway, AR 72033  
(501) 329-8193

Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. Postage PAID  
Conway, AR 72032  
Permit No. 155

### **Publication Data**

The VISION is published 6 times yearly by the Arkansas State Association of Free Will Baptists, Inc. Executive Director, David Taylor, is the editor. Subscription rates are \$6.00 per subscription per year. The editor's email contact information is:

**david@arfwb.org**

The editor reserves the right to accept or reject any articles submitted for publication. All printed articles represent the views of the authors and do not reflect the policy or position of Arkansas Free Will Baptists.

### **Submission Deadlines:**

Jan-Feb Issue ... December 5th.  
Mar-Apr Issue ... February 5th.  
May-June Issue ... April 5th.  
July-Aug Issue ... June 5th.  
Sept-Oct Issue ... August 5th.  
Nov-Dec Issue ... October 5th.