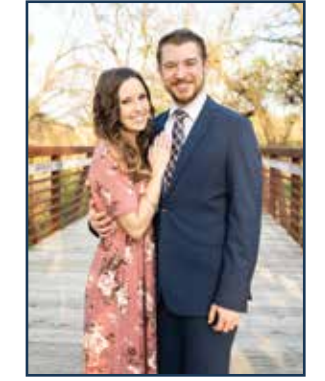




John Peeples,
IBFI Mission Director

OUR NEWEST MISSIONARIES!



I am excited to present our new missionaries to Brazil, **Jeremy and Joneia Bennett**. They are sent out of the Worth Baptist Church in Fort Worth, Texas. They are planning to begin their missionary ministry working in the city of Caxias do Sul located in the southern Brazilian state of Rio Grande do Sul. They are both graduates of Heartland Baptist Bible College and have a long missionary heritage. Joneia is the daughter of John and Neila Yelle, missionaries in Caxias do Sul, Brazil, and granddaughter of Joe and Elaine Hawkins, pioneer missionaries to the upper Amazon and Rio Negro portions of Northern Brazil.



They are well prepared, and I believe that God will bless their ministry. Please be in prayer for them and their ministry as they begin their deputation.

HOMELESS NO MORE

And of some have compassion, making a difference... Jude 22

Scott & Darla Griffin

Greetings,

We are excited about the growth that Homeless No More Baptist Church is experiencing. Our attendance has been a steady 30 every Sunday and our Wednesday morning service has been averaging 20, thank you Lord. Since our last letter five souls trusted Christ as their Savior; much prayer is needed for them. The men in our discipleship program, Addicted No More, are doing great. All the guys are over one year clean and sober. We are definitely praising the Lord for this.

With growth comes financial needs. The church building that we are renting needs many repairs, such as the bathrooms need new flooring, the room that we meet in needs repairs, and the ceiling fans need replacing, and our biggest prayer request is, we would like to move into the main auditorium but the two air conditioning units are broken, in addition, our vans need repairs. Please pray for these needs, thank you.



Moving Forward,
The Griffins

We are looking forward to more growth and seeing more souls come to Christ, as well as lives being transformed. Thank you for all your prayers and support.



IBFI MISSIONARY SEMINAR RECAP

We had a tremendous IBFI Missionary Seminar! God blessed with a great attendance of 22 present, and another four on the internet. The content of the sessions presented was valuable, helpful, encouraging, and from the heart of missionaries and pastors with many years of experience. I believe the impact of this meeting will make a positive impact on the ministries of all in attendance. After the IBFI May Fellowship meeting, we took the missionaries out for lunch and had a great time of fellowship together. Thank you to all who gave gifts to make this possible!



INDEPENDENT BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL

724 N. Jim Wright Freeway
Fort Worth, Texas 76108

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INDEPENDENT BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL

The Searchlight

JUNE/JULY 2021 VOLUME 38 ISSUE 1

The 37th Annual May Fellowship Meeting was Another Milestone in the Ongoing of the IBFI and the NBBS!

“This is the Lord’s doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.” Psalm 118:23



Dr. Willie Weaver, IBFI President



Evangelist Archie L. Davis, Jr.
Retired Command Sergeant Major



Dr. Frank Gagliano, Pastor
South Haven Baptist Ch., Springfield, TN



A Capacity Crowd Looks on During the 37th Commencement Service of the Norris Bible Baptist Seminary, May 19, 2021

NBBS Opening Day Rally - Tuesday, August 10, 2021 - First Day of the New School Year!

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



IBFI Mission Agency

Helping independent Baptist churches get their missionaries to the field

With local church sent missionaries serving in

- Brazil
- Dominican Republic
- Guatemala
- Honduras
- Malawi
- Mexico
- USA

Help us expand to reach around the world!
Visit us on the web: www.ibfi.us email: missionoffice@ibfi.us

It can be a very transforming experience to **start the day in class at a Bible school like NBBS - where you will be taught, by preachers, the Word of God in a very comprehensive manner. II Corinthians 3:18**

Come and find out! School starts, Tuesday, Aug. 10.

O Lord; in the morning will I look up Ps. 5:3

The inward man is renewed day by day. II Cor. 4:16

The Searchlight

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724 N. Jim Wright Freeway | Ft. Worth, TX 76108 | Phone: 817.367.3422 | Fax: 817.246.4884 | Email: info@IBFI.us | Website: www.IBFI.us
IBFI Board of Directors: Pastor Eric Crawford, Dr. Raymond Barber, Mission Director John Peeples, NBBS President Jonathan Stewart, Pastor Glen Anderson, Pastor Barry Bedwell, Pastor Mark Brown, Pastor Chad Fitts, Pastor Tyler Gillit, Pastor David Grice, Pastor Heath Hogue, Pastor Charles Pugh, Pastor David Pugh, Pastor Kenneth Ralph, and Pastor Charles Wetherbee

**A VALIANT SOLDIER
OF THE CROSS STACKS ARMS**



*Dr. Raymond W. Barber,
IBFI President Emeritus*

DR. MANUEL G. ORTIZ, JR (1937-2021)

On April 9, 2021, our dearly beloved friend, Dr. Manuel G. Ortiz, Jr., stacked arms on this earth and was reassigned his post in Heaven where he was greeted by his Commander-in-Chief who pinned on him Heaven's highest award, the **Medal of Honor**. He now rests in peace forever.

The name Ortiz has been synonymous with Baptist Fundamentalism going back to Manuel G. Ortiz, Sr., whom God used to found the **First Mexican Fundamental Baptist Church** of San Antonio, Texas, and to pioneer the Fundamental Baptist Mexican movement, not only in San Antonio, but also across the southwest and into other parts of the country. Upon his homegoing, the mantle was passed to Manuel Ortiz, Jr., who pastored the church for forty-five years. He was blessed of God to enlarge the ministry at home and abroad. His expanded ministries included an institute dedicated to training men for the ministry.

Dr. Ortiz was with us from the beginning when the Independent Baptist Fellowship International and the Norris Bible Baptist Seminary were founded in 1984. His faithfulness to the IBFI and the NBBS was a key element in enhancing the ministry of both the fellowship and seminary. His membership on several of the fellowship boards gave him the opportunity to share his wisdom and expertise in church building and preacher training. He was a guiding light throughout his ministry with the IBFI and NBBS.



My personal friendship with Dr. Ortiz goes back beyond his forty-five years as pastor of the First Fundamental Mexican Baptist Church when he served with his dad and was mentored by Dr. J. Frank Norris and Dr. Claude Bonam, Sr. My dad was a close friend and associate of Dr. Manuel Ortiz, Sr.

My wife Helen and I have personal memories of the time Dr. and Mrs. Ortiz accompanied us on a trip to the

Holy Land. What a delightful time we had with them. We also enjoyed many IBFI fellowship meetings with them, especially the meeting that was held at the First Mexican Fundamental Baptist Church. They hosted us in a great way.

HE PREACHED THE WORD

The preachers of the IBFI highly respected Manuel Ortiz, not only for his loyalty to the fellowship, but also for his unblemished character and Christ-like demeanor. He was truly a man for all seasons. He preached with *compassion, conviction, and courage*. He preached without *apology* and without *compromise*. He preached to *magnify* God's Word, to *glorify* God's Son, and to *edify* God's people.

HE FOUGHT A GOOD FIGHT

He fought for the faith that was once delivered to the saints. He fought *vigorously, diligently, earnestly, tirelessly, and convincingly*. He fought to win, and he won! His weapon was the "Sword of the Spirit," and with it, he mortally wounded the enemies of the cross.

HE KEPT THE FAITH

Dr. Ortiz kept the faith as a preacher of truth and righteousness. He kept the faith with his wife and family, to whom he left a priceless legacy. He kept the faith with his fellow preachers, serving as an example to the young and as an inspiration to the mature. He kept the faith with God whom he served with *determination, diligence, and dedication*.

A GREAT MAY FELLOWSHIP MEETING!



*Eric Crawford,
IBFI President*

The May fellowship was a great blessing and well attended! Each preacher did a wonderful job reminding us that Jesus truly is the answer. We were blessed by the challenging sermons of our two guest

preachers, Dr. Frank Gagliano, long time pastor of South Haven Baptist Church in Springfield, Tennessee, and Evangelist Archie L. Davis, Jr., retired Command Sergeant, of Northside Baptist Church in Nolanville, Texas. During the meeting we had the great opportunity to congratulate Dr. & Mrs. Barber on the celebration of their seventy years of marriage!

The offering on Wednesday, exceeded our goal of \$60,000, and was given or committed in quick fashion. It was good to witness the continued generosity to the Lord's work by churches and individuals. During the business meeting, and upon recommendation of the Board of Directors, the general assembly voted to sell the properties of the IBFI and build a new campus. This has been studied by the board over the past three years. There were three options that the board considered:

- 1) To do nothing.
- 2) To sell part of the property and use the proceeds to add classrooms to the Conference Center or remodel the existing school building as well. It was determined that the additions and renovations needed would exceed the revenue from the sale of the property and require the raising of more funds.
- 3) To sell all of the properties of the IBFI and buy property to build new facilities debt free. Both the board and the general assembly voted unanimously for the third option.

It has been amazing to watch our school grow over the past seven years. The need for more space is very evident by anyone who has attended classes at NBBS. I am excited to see the fellowship and school move forward. This move would not be possible had it not been for the faithful support and sacrifice by so many for the school over these many years.

A FINISHED COURSE

Dr. Ortiz finished his course as a soldier brave and true. He finished with high honors. He finished his course after serving God productively and serving his generation well.

FUNERAL SERVICE

It was my honor to preach Dr. Ortiz's funeral service on Sunday evening, May 9. The sanctuary of the First Mexican Fundamental Baptist Church was filled o capacity with family, church members, friends, and pastors.

On Monday morning, Dr. Willie Weaver preached to another fine crowd, many of whom were not privileged to attend the Sunday evening service. Interment was at Fort Sam Houston Military Cemetery. Dr. Ortiz is survived by his wife of sixty years, Diamantina, and four children, Manuel, Rachel, Deborah, and Elizabeth.



His legacy lives on. He cast a long shadow, and "he being dead, yet speaketh." He speaks for generations to come of the gospel he loved and preached for almost a half century. My admonition to everyone who reads this is to **KEEP LOOKING UP—JESUS IS COMING SOON!**

The next issue of the Searchlight will include a biographical overview of Dr. Ortiz's life. Several historical pictures will be included.

**CHURCHES, PASTORS, PREACHERS, ADMINISTRATION, TEACHERS,
AND STUDENTS PERSERVERED, AND RALLIED AROUND THE CAUSE!**



*Jonathan J. Stewart,
NBBS President*

The amazing, marvelous, and wonderful grace of God more than sustained the seminary through challenging times this past school year.

A delayed graduation in August for the May 2020 graduates, not only put a glowing finish on the 2019-2020 school year, but it launched the 2020-2021 school year, with an enthusiastic send off!

The pictures below exemplify what God did for us throughout one of the most trying years politically, societally, spiritually, financially, and medically in our world's and our nation's history. What a week of victory this year's May fellowship was for the IBFI and the NBBS!

The school year started and ended with the overcoming, overriding, and overseeing unmerited favor and enablement of God (His grace!).



*Dr. Terry Riggsby,
NBBS Field Representative*

GREAT FELLOWSHIP MEETING!
The Independent Baptist Fellowship International just completed its 37th May Fellowship Meeting held in its Fort Worth, Texas, facilities. To date, I have had the privilege of attending every one of these meetings since its inception in 1984, and I can say, without reservations, this was the best one of them all! From the spirit of unity, good Bible preaching, graduation services, to the generous offering, the Lord blessed in every way!

I want to personally thank every pastor, full-time Christian worker, layman, IBFI and school administration for their attendance, involvement, and planning that allowed us to have a very successful meeting! Please be in prayer for the Norris Bible Baptist Seminary fall semester, as we add additional students.

A reminder, I am available for pulpit supply, or a presentation of the Norris Bible Baptist Seminary. You may contact me at 817-648-1859.

UPCOMING EVENTS

IBF METROPLEX MEETINGS

The monthly meetings have been randomly held with scheduled meetings to start in the near future

**MAKE YOUR PLANS NOW
TO ATTEND
IBFI FALL FELLOWSHIP MEETING**

Tuesday - Thursday, October 12-14, 2021
Raymond W. Barber Conference Center
Ft. Worth, Texas

Full details can be found at the IBFI website www.ibfi.us

**OPENING DAY RALLY
FOR NORRIS BIBLE BAPTIST SEMINARY**

August 10, 2021
Orientation begins at 8:00 AM
There will be a special charge from Dr. Barber, the NBBS Chancellor at 11:00 AM. A luncheon will follow. Full details will be in the August/September issue of the Searchlight and at the IBFI website www.ibfi.us

*"Blessed is the nation whose God is Lord... "
Psalm 33:12a*



ALUMNUS
*Kenneth Ralph,
Alumni President*

O magnify the Lord with me, let us exalt his name together – Psalm 34:3.

When one becomes an Alumnus of the Norris Bible Baptist Seminary, one enters into a fellowship of men and women of like faith and practice. I was blessed and encouraged to see many of our NBBS Alumni at the May Fellowship Meeting. We experienced a great sense of unity and watched as God worked in every sermon, conversation, and offering.



There were two needs mentioned in the Alumni Luncheon, and both of those needs were met with optimistic enthusiasm. After exceeding our goal of \$60,000 in the general assembly, what seemed to be an effortless fashion, the men present at the luncheon went above and beyond to meet these needs:

- 1) Due to unforeseen circumstances (a busted pipe), in the dormitory, we needed \$3000 to complete the repair. We watched you and others you know give sacrificially to the cause, and within minutes the funds were raised. (Please note: this is an immediate need, if you have yet to send your promised amount, please do so promptly.) Praise God!
- 2) As you are already aware, we are reinstating the "Alumni Scholarship." On the spot we were able to pass "the hat" (Bro. Peoples Cowboy Hat), and receive an offering totaling \$750. These funds will go to a student training for the ministry, whose life will affect thousands of others. This is fruit to your account (Phil 4:17). Praise the Lord!



On Tuesday Evening, Brother Terry Terry (Friendship Baptist Church Boyd, Texas), received the Alumnus of the Year Award for his key involvement with the school throughout the years. Brother Terry has a passion for souls and strong work ethic which should be an inspiration to us all.

Truly, we have many reasons to magnify the Lord today. We have seen God do wonders in our fellowship, with our Alumni, through our School, Missions Agency, and Searchlight Publication. THIS is a TREMENDOUS time to be an ALUMNUS!

SEVENTY YEARS IN THE MINISTRY

Recently, Rev. Billy Kyle was honored by his church, Emmanuel Baptist church in Marion, Ohio, for 70 years in the ministry. Bro. Kyle has been a long time faithful supporter of the Norris Bible Baptist Seminary and the Independent Baptist Fellowship International. Bro. Kyle will be 89 years old this coming November. Mrs. Kyle has been faithfully serving with him. Congratulations to Bro. Kyle for 70 faithful years in the ministry. - Dr. Willie Weaver

