



# THE BAPTIST MESSENGER

DIGITAL EDITION | MAY 7, 2025

YOU'RE INVITED TO AN

## OPEN HOUSE

📅 MAY 15, 2025 ⌚ 1:00 p.m - 3:00 p.m.

📍 **300 JOHNNY BENCH DR.**  
IN BRICKTOWN



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# OKLAHOMA BAPTISTS, WATERSEDGE & AFFILIATES TO HOST OPEN HOUSE ON MAY 15 AT NEW BRICKTOWN OFFICES

by Messenger Staff

Oklahoma Baptist pastors, church members, friends and others are invited to attend a special open house event at the new offices on Thursday, May 15, from 1 to 3 p.m.

The new office building, located at 300 Johnny Bench Dr., Oklahoma City, (directly across from the Bricktown Ballpark to the south) is owned by WatersEdge, formerly known as the Baptist Foundation of Oklahoma.

The building serves as ministry office space for WatersEdge, Oklahoma Baptists, Baptist Village Communities and Oklahoma Baptist Homes for Children.

The come-and-go Open House event will be a time for Oklahoma Baptists to explore the new ministry offices. Light snacks and drinks will be made available during the building tour. Free parking will be available east of the building (between the building and the Residence Inn) or across the canal.

Leaders with Oklahoma Baptists and WatersEdge said, "We look forward to welcoming you and showing you how we're using this space to serve Oklahoma Baptist pastors and churches in Oklahoma and beyond from our new Bricktown location, as we advance the Gospel together."

The event is free of charge, and attendees are asked to RSVP online and visit [watersedge.com/openhouse](https://watersedge.com/openhouse) for more details.





## MEN'S RETREAT ENCOURAGES AND DRAWS MEN FROM ACROSS THE STATE

by Prophet Bailey, Oklahoma Baptists men's ministry partner

On April 26, 2024, the Men's Retreat ended with a challenge. To move the event back to the larger room venue, the Tabernacle (TAB), we would need to "Take a brother" (TAB). On April 25, 2025, after six years of waiting, the sound of more than twelve hundred men singing praises filled the Tabernacle as Matt Roberson led worship.

The men accepted the challenge in a great way, and God answered the prayers of men from across the state. One of the most encouraging aspects of the 25th Men's Retreat was the presence of many first-time attendees. The retreat continues to draw men from across Oklahoma and beyond, including participants from Texas and chaplains from Tinker Air Force Base.

In 2024, attendees requested breakout sessions at the Men's Retreat. This year, we held six repeating breakouts and one major breakout on Saturday. One attendee applauded and noted, "Every breakout was full." This demonstrated that the men were hungry to be equipped and challenged.

Friday night's main session began with Tarvoris "Coach Tee" Uzoigwe, Oklahoma Baptists evangelism and apologetics ministry partner, who posed the question: can we truly celebrate on Sundays when no one is rescuing the lost with the Gospel?

He invited a former student named Andre, who shared a powerful testimony about overcoming his fear of sharing the Gospel. The evening concluded with Josh Smith, who emphasized the need for godly men in both the church and the home, asserting that such men will change the world. He suggested that Adam's first sin might have been his failure to confront Satan while he was tempting Eve.

The morning session was opened by Sam Porter, who initiated the Men's Retreat at Falls Creek 25 years ago. He highlighted the importance of seeking God's plan for our lives. Sam was honored with the Laddie Adams Lifetime Achievement Award for his many years of service in Disaster Relief, presented by Jason Yarbrough, the state director for Disaster Relief.

Keith Burkhart, the state men's director who coined the term "Rewired" for the Men's Retreat, closed the retreat by challenging the men to be obedient to the command of making disciples. The messages deeply resonated with the attendees, leading many to accept Christ and seek prayer.

The morning session also featured the annual awards for competition winners. The champions of cornhole were Josh and Stephen from Frederick, First; the dodgeball winners came from Velma Baptist Church; Stephen from Frederick, First won the 5K; Kolby and Rick from El Reno, Prarie View took the pickleball championship; and Casey Estes won the archery competition.

For years, the Newalla, First Men's Ministry has served at the Men's Retreat, often led by John Walker. This year marked the first time he was able to attend after his wife had been ill for the past two years. A special thank you goes to the Men's Retreat volunteers, the Falls Creek Staff, Sportsman United 4 Christ, Disaster Relief for providing lunch on Friday, Steve Wood for grilling, the Lighthouse Police Department for bringing their Bearcat, and Travis David for coordinating the shooting competition.

For more information about Oklahoma Baptists Men's Ministry, visit <https://www.oklahomabaptists.org/men/>.



# COMMUNICATORS REFLECT ON WORK DONE 'ALL IN THE NAME OF THE LORD' AT 2025 BCA WORKSHOP

By Alice Hobbs and Macala Mays

This article was originally written by Alice Hobbs, Macala Mays and published to Baptist Press.

SAN ANTONIO (BCA) – Baptist communicators from across the nation made their way to Alamo City April 21-24, for the annual Baptist Communicators Association (BCA) spring workshop.

Each keynote and breakout session strived to equip the nearly 70 workshop attendees with tools to add to their professional toolbelts as well as a healthy reminder of why what they do matters, not just for the here and now, but for eternity.

## LESSONS LEARNED

After a brief devotional led by BCA Program Chair Heather Penna of Texas Baptists, keynote speaker Kristin Cole, founder and CEO of KC Communications, kicked off the first full day of the workshop.

Cole, who specializes in crisis communications, focused her time on the importance of building and sustaining trust with clients, especially as professionals seeking to reflect Christ.

Following Cole, Jeremy Honea, creative director of e3 Partners, continued the thread of reflecting the Lord through the craft of communications in a keynote address titled, "Co-Creators with God."

"Anything that we create, design [or] communicate that is designed to make more believers is us using our craft to physically build the temple continually," he said.

The trend of memorable keynote sessions carried through into the next two days of the workshop as communicators heard from Katie Frugé, director of Texas Baptists' Center for Cultural Engagement; Jonathan Malm, author and entrepreneur, most notable for his work with Sunday Social; and Matt Miller, Founder Principal of MAS Media.

Workshop guests also enjoyed a special lunch time panel on the first day of the workshop, which featured those who received a Grand Prize in the 2024 Wilmer C. Fields Awards Competition.

## A HISTORIC NIGHT

Communicators dressed in their best Texan attire April 22 and filled Casa Rio, the first restaurant to open along the San Antonio River Walk in 1946, for the 61st annual Wilmer C. Fields Awards Ceremony.

BCA members also honored Jim Veneman, renowned photographer, photo editor and photojournalism professor, as a Lifetime Member. BCA Lifetime Members are selected from current or former members who have given significant service to the field of communications.

Veneman has been a member of BCA since 1984. He is the only member to serve as president for four terms and the only president to serve in three different decades. Jim accepted the Lifetime Membership honor and award with his wife Carol in San Antonio.

## SERVING TOGETHER AND LOOKING AHEAD

Before the conclusion of the 2025 BCA workshop, members voted on and welcomed new officers for the 2025-26 term. Outgoing president Bobby Puffenburger from Bay Leaf Baptist Church in North Carolina, passed the gavel to newly elected president Brandon Elrod of the North American Mission Board.

The workshop concluded with a service project that had members filling mission bags for Texas Baptists River Ministries.

BCA's 71st annual spring workshop will be April 2026 in Alabama. Members attending the 2025 SBC Annual Meeting in Dallas are encouraged to attend the BCA dessert fellowship June 8 at 9 p.m.

## OKLAHOMA BAPTISTS, WATERSEDGE STAFF BRING HOME BCA AWARDS

Several staff members from Oklahoma Baptists and WatersEdge participated in the BCA workshop. Members of WatersEdge and Oklahoma Baptists' staff were recognized for their creative work with awards as part of the Wilmer C. Fields BCA Awards Competition, included:

- Harve Allen, WatersEdge content creator
- Sabrina Cranford, Oklahoma Baptists creative lead
- Marissa Crowson, WatersEdge creative director
- Brook Daniel, *Baptist Messenger* graphic designer
- Dominic Graziano, Oklahoma Baptists videographer
- Brian Hobbs, *Baptist Messenger* editor
- Jacob King, *Baptist Messenger* staff writer
- Marcus Wehmuller, WatersEdge advertising specialist

# You're Invited!



## OBU & Oklahoma Baptists in Dallas!

RECEPTION

Tuesday, June 10, 2025 | 7 p.m.

AT&T Stadium, Arlington, TX

Join us for a special gathering in conjunction with the SBC annual meeting!

This event welcomes:

- Oklahoma Baptists
- OBU alumni and friends
- Prospective students and families

While this year's gathering will be lighter on food, it will be rich in experience. Join us to connect with the OK Baptists community, learn more about OBU, and take advantage of opportunities to tour AT&T Stadium!



REGISTRATION REQUIRED

### SPONSORS



# CHURCH NEWS

## OKLAHOMA MARCH FOR LIFE SET FOR JUNE 7

Pro-life citizens across Oklahoma will gather on Saturday, June 7 in Oklahoma City for the annual March for Life event.

This event is affiliated with the annual National March for Life and will emphasize protecting the unborn and advancing a culture of life. At the conclusion of the march, which begins at 10:30 a.m. near the Oklahoma City National Memorial, a rally will be held outside the Oklahoma State Capitol that will feature times of prayer, speakers and music.

During the same day, a pro-life satellite event also will be held in the Tulsa area. For more details, visit <https://marchforlife.org/oklahoma/>.

## UPCOMING EVENTS/INFORMATION

### DR Orientation/Credentialing

Mary 29 - Zoom Training

Register online at [okdisasterhelp.org](http://okdisasterhelp.org)

### DR Orientation/Credentialing

August 23 - Location TBD

Register online at [okdisasterhelp.org](http://okdisasterhelp.org)

### Chaplain Manual/OSFA Training

September 4-6 at Tulsa, South  
10310 S Sheridan Rd, Tulsa, OK 74133  
Cost \$60.00

Instructor is Naomi Paget.

To register, please email

[pjones@oklahomabaptists.org](mailto:pjones@oklahomabaptists.org)

### DR Orientation/Credentialing

September 20 – Location TBD

Register online at [okdisasterhelp.org](http://okdisasterhelp.org)

### CISM Training

October 2-3 at Tulsa, South  
10310 S Sheridan Rd, Tulsa, OK 74133  
Cost \$50.00

Instructor is Greg Giltner.

To register, please email

[pjones@oklahomabaptists.org](mailto:pjones@oklahomabaptists.org)



JUNE 7, 2025



10:30am march from  
OKC National Memorial to  
the Capitol Rally at 12pm



11:45 Rally (no march)  
at Chapman Green  
600 South Main.



Let's add your event to the  
Oklahoma March for Life  
satellite events. Stand  
up and be counted.



Scan for more info.  
[ok.marchforlife.org](http://ok.marchforlife.org)

## NOW HIRING

# VILLAGE MANAGER

*Do you have a desire to serve older adults in a  
Christian environment?*

**Baptist Village Communities is  
looking for a manager for our  
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- EXCELLENT COMMUNICATION
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