



Laborers Together Newsletter

Memphis School of Preaching Alumni Association

“For we are laborers together with God. . .” (1 Cor. 3:9)

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NOTE OF GRATITUDE TO OUR ALUMNI IN THE PASSING OF CURTIS A. CATES

November 7, 2013

Dear Alumni,

Words are inadequate to express our love and gratitude for all of the kindnesses shown to our sons and me (as well as to our daughters-in-love and grandchildren) during Curtis' lengthy illness and in the days following his passing. The best I can say is "thank you" more than you can know.

Curtis fully believed in the strength and encouragement of a group of alumni he considered to be the "greatest." No other school has a more loyal, dedicated, and working association than the MSOP graduates who make up our alumni!

Annette B. Cates

[Sympathy cards may be sent to Annette Cates, 9194 Lakeside Dr., Olive Branch, MS 38654]

LETTER TO MSOP SUPPORTERS

October 30, 2013

Dear Brethren:

As I write these words to you, my heart is flooded with a mixture of emotions.

I am grieving. The physical body of brother Curtis A. Cates, Director Emeritus of the Memphis School of Preaching, was laid to rest yesterday afternoon in Fort Deposit, AL. Brother Cates passed away last Friday afternoon, after a long and valiant fight with leukemia.

Brother Cates served as Director of the school for nearly 25 years, and served the school for over a quarter of a century. As I write this thank you letter to you, a supporter of MSOP, I am very aware of the fact that some of you, no doubt, began supporting the school during the time that brother Cates was Director. I am fairly certain that some of you began supporting the school because of your confidence in brother Cates. Thank you so much for your continuing support. I pledge to you that we will "keep the toes of the school pointed in the right direction," as brother Cates was fond of saying.

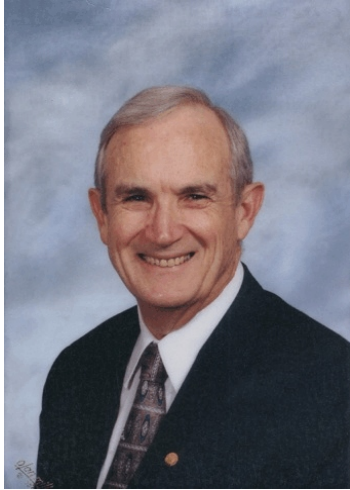
I am rejoicing. Although I miss brother Cates already, it would be selfish to want to bring him back to this world of woe here below. I rejoice that brother Cates is absent from his disease-ridden body and present with the Lord (2 Cor. 5:8).

I am grateful. First, I am grateful for the tremendous work that brother Cates did while he was living. I am grateful for the excellent work brother Liddell did in following brother Cates. I am most grateful for supporters like you who have made it possible, and continue to make it possible, for the work of the Memphis School of Preaching to continue. Your generous gifts have enabled us to spread the gospel far and wide. Our students are drinking from wells that you helped to dig. We love and appreciate you so much.

His servant and yours,

B. J. Clarke
Director

PLEASE SEND YOUR TRIBUTES



Curtis A. Cates, beloved Director Emeritus of the Memphis School of Preaching, passed on to his reward on Friday afternoon, October 25, 2013. His funeral was held at the Forest Hill church of Christ at 2 p.m. on Monday, October 28th, 2013 and was live streamed over the OABS and MSOP web-sites. To view the archived video, you may go to www.oabs.org or www.msop.org. The graveside service was held on Tuesday, October 29th, 2013 at 2 p.m. at Little Sandy Ridge Cemetery, Sandy Ridge in Lowndes County, AL. Our thanks to all alumni who came to either the visitation, the funeral, or the graveside service.

Brother Cates' influence and impact on Christian education was and is immeasurable. We know that our former students and graduates possess a multitude of cherished memories of brother Cates as a teacher, as a Director, as a Christian gentleman, etc.

With the blessings of the Cates family, we are planning to compile a book containing a wealth of favorite memories of the wit, the wisdom, and the warmth of Curtis A. Cates. He was well known for teaching his classes with enthusiasm. He was so good at communicating truth in a memorable way, often in a single, unforgettable sentence. Hundreds and hundreds of students were blessed to hear his "Cates-isms" in class.

Would you help us pay tribute to this wonderful and godly man by answering a few brief questions? What did you appreciate most about brother Curtis Cates as a man? What did you appreciate most about brother Curtis Cates as a teacher? What was one of your favorite classes you had with brother Curtis Cates and why? What is one of your favorite humorous stories told by brother Curtis Cates? What is one of your favorite illustrations brother Curtis Cates used in his teaching? Do you have a favorite memory (humorous or serious) that you experienced with brother Curtis Cates? What is your favorite "Cates-ism" (a memorable short phrase or saying used uniquely by brother Curtis Cates in his teaching)? Email your answers to the special email address set up for compiling these precious memories: cates-isms@msop.org.

In addition to your answers to these questions, feel free to copy something you have already written about brother Cates on Facebook, Twitter, etc. and include it in your email. We would also love for you to send any pictures you have of brother Cates.

Thank you so much for assisting in this project. It is our goal to have the book ready in time for the upcoming 2014 annual MSOP lectureship. All proceeds from the book will be used to fund the teaching of the Word at the Memphis School of Preaching.

Make Your Plans To Attend The Forty-eighth Annual MSOP Lectureship, March 30, 2014 - April 3, 2014. The title is "STILL STANDING: BUT NOT STANDING STILL".

ALUMNI NEWS

Recent Moves

Mac Ballard (1981) writes, I will be moving to a new work, if the Lord allows, the first of December. I will leave Crossville, TN and go to a work close to McMinnville.

Matt McBrayer (2010) has moved from Farmington, MO to Newton, KS and is now working with the Old Main Street congregation.

Don Blackwell (1996) writes, "I have given my resignation as the preacher at the North Charleston Church of Christ, where I have served for the last 8 years and will soon be moving to Southaven, MS to work full-time as the director of the Gospel Broadcasting Network. I have already bought a house in Southaven but will remain at North Charleston until they hire a new preacher."

Donnie Vick (2009) writes, "My wife Stephanie and I are expecting our first child Ruth Starling Vick anytime. Her due date was November 5. I moved to Lynchburg, VA in April and am working with the Seven Hills Church of Christ as an associate minister and participating in the congregation's program Lighting the Fire. Several from Seven Hills and I traveled to Marcala, Honduras in July for a medical mission trip. Twenty-seven were baptized, doubling the size of that congregation."

Jason Roberts (1995) has moved from Valdosta, GA. His new address is 2325 Whitman Lane, Flower Mound, TX 75028. Email: jrmal01@bellsouth.net. He is no longer preaching full time and is working for Aflac.

Jeff Collett (2002) is the new preacher for the Fairfield Congregation in Bell Buckle, Tennessee.

Just Married

Tony Clay (2011) preacher at Enon

church of Christ in Webb, AL was married to Mary Taggart in Pell City, AL on September 21, 2013.

Travis Byars (2013) was married to Brittney Young in Montgomery Alabama on November 9, 2013.

Looking For Congregation

Ron Reeves (1981) is searching for a new work. If you can assist him, he can be reached at: ron49linda49@aol.com.

Births

Bobby (1979) and Joan Liddell welcomed their seventh grandchild, Stella Jayne Sayle, born June 9, 2013, to their daughter Keri and her husband Stephen.

Congratulations to **Josh Romo (2006)** and wife Ashley on the birth of a son, Jensen. Josh preaches for the 9th and Main congregation in San Angelo, Texas.

Illness

Lee Davis (1985) writes, "As some of you know, I have been having some health issues after I took the flu shoot three weeks ago. I took the shot on a Monday afternoon and woke up Tuesday morning with a "lazy, drooping eye". The doctor prescribed some steroids for me to take. I was also given an antibiotic to take care of a sinus infection(the reason I was at the doctor in the first place). The antibiotic caused my blood sugar to go down, while the steroids caused my blood sugar to go very high (more than I thought). I preached a meeting at the Sharon, TN church starting on the Saturday of the week I received the meds. I had several problems physically during this week. The next weekend after I had returned to Georgia, I lost the ability to focus my left eye. Due to this, I suffered from severe vertigo. I still preached but it was very difficult. I have seen three doctors this week, and I am to have surgery on my eyes on

December 5th and 12th. The steroids sped up an existing problem I had with my diabetes. In reality, had I not had this problem, I would have not known that given enough time, I would have developed this problem eventually and would have experienced more damage than I have received to my eye. I look at this as a blessing. The sharp spike in my blood sugar has caused several blood vessels to rupture in my left eye, especially, and in my right eye, as well. So, a couple of things have transpired. One, preaching from an outline, for now, is not going to happen. Preaching from a Power Point sermon does not bother my eye as much. Two, teaching my classes in OABS, Georgia School of Preaching and Four Seas College, is at this time, not possible. I just cannot read my notes. I am going to try to do so in a couple of weeks. Three, I will not be able to go on the Mission trip this year that has been planned since March. I am able to "put off" the trip for a year and not lose the ticket cost and hopefully the Singapore Hotel. I will lose the Visa cost, and the cost of two nights of a hotel in China. If it is the Lord's will, I will be able to go next year. What is most important to me is that you be praying for me that the surgery is successful and that I will be able to get back to my schedule as soon as possible. I do know one thing – no flu shot for me, again! I love and appreciate you all!"

Mission Work

Mark Lance (1998) writes, "I will be leaving for New Zealand Jan 20th and return on Feb. 10th. I thought I had enough funds already to pay for my airline ticket, but the cost of a ticket to New Zealand is three times the price my ticket to Budapest, Hungary normally is. If anyone wants to help, send funds to Chalmette church of Christ, P.O. Box 1165, Chalmette, LA 70044 and earmarked them for Mark Lance mission trip, since we

already oversee the funds to Lance and Kristen Mosher in New Zealand."

Eugene Jenkins (1980) writes, "Luvenia and I continue our work with CAMPAIGNS FOR CHRIST THROUGH WORLD MISSIONS under the oversight of the Trenton elders in Trenton, Missouri. We have been fulfilling speaking engagements and giving the report of our work to supporters and other interested congregations. We will be back in Jamaica in January, and again in May and June."

John Grubb (2013-HA) writes concerning his trip to Singapore and Malaysia (Nov. 19-Dec. 23), "I will be speaking approximately 35 times during an upcoming trip to Singapore and Malaysia. I will be conducting two bi-lingual (English and Chinese) meetings, and will also be conducting English gospel meetings as well. In addition, I am taking a number of books to be donated to the Four Seas College library. This will be my 51st mission trip since 1985."

Timothy Wilkes, Sr. (1981) and Tim Wilkes, II (1905) will be teaching in the Philippine Theological College in early December. In July the college will graduate its first Master's degree recipients. The college is 4 hours north of Manila in Pagasinan and has around 40 students. The school offers sound Biblical teaching and is supplying Filipino congregations with faithful, domestically trained preachers.

Lee Snow (2012) writes, "I preach in a mission work in Middle GA., and we have had 68 people agree to Bible studies!"

Patrick Swayne (2005) writes, "We passed our one year working anniversary in Singapore back in August of this year. Things are going well as we labor for the Lord at Four Seas College and among the churches of the region. Four Seas is preparing to graduate nine students and send them back into the

mission field. Victor Chu, who finished his study earlier than the rest in August as a wrap around student, is already working full time with the congregation in Ipoh, Malaysia. Terry The, George Zhang, and Bob Xiang have committed themselves to full time works: Terry in Johor Bahru, Malaysia, George in Wuhu, China, and Bob in Shanghai, China. George and Bob will be overseen by Lim Ah Pin Road church of Christ here in Singapore. Alvin Lin will also graduate; he is a native Singaporean and has been coming to the school part time over four years while working with the Lim Ah Pin Rd. congregation. He will continue that work. James Williams is our only male student without a work lined up; he is currently looking for opportunities in his home country of India. The remaining three graduates are ladies (Jaslyn Chan, Rebecca Song, Phetsavanh Inthavong) who will return to their homelands as stronger and more capable Christians (Malaysia, China, and Laos respectively). The graduation date is November 23. Following the graduation, Four Seas College will hold its 6th Annual Lectureship hosted by Jurong church of Christ. The theme is, "Who Is Jesus?". The lectureship will run from November 27 to December 1 and will feature speakers from five different countries. Memphis School of Preaching will be well represented by her alumni, with four graduates traveling to Singapore to speak (**Billy Bland (1977)**, **Tim Burroughs (2004)**, **Tim Hayes (2007)**, and **Brett Rutherford (1996)**). With me and **Peter Chin (2006)**, there are six Memphis grads on the program this year. Another Memphis graduate, **Lee Davis (1985)**, was planning to attend but has recently informed us that he will not be able to make the trip due to health problems. Some other illnesses he's had recently have uncovered a condition he had in

his eye that will require attention ASAP; he is scheduled to have surgeries on December 5 and 12. Please keep the Four Seas graduates, our lectureship, and brother Lee Davis in your prayers! Please also pray for our brethren in the Philippines; we heard recently from a 2012 Four Seas graduate that the recent typhoon that passed over the country left 19 Christian families in his region (Arapal) without homes. They are seeking financial and material help towards rebuilding; if you can help, please contact me and I will put you in touch. By the way, I recently ran into **Barry Hatcher (1975)** in Jakarta, Indonesia. He is coming to the end of a three month stint there and is doing well. He and Melany are now based in Alabama; Melany works there as a nurse with Alabama Christian Academy. All of that may not be news to some of you, but it was to me so I thought I would share it."

Sean Hochdorf (1996) writes, "It is such a blessing to greet you on behalf of Anita and myself. We are packing up and getting ready for our return to Tanzania. We are most excited about our reunion with the mission team and the great brethren from Tanzania. We still have a couple of appointments left before we return, and I will be undergoing some camera training for the new production studio at the Andrew Connally School of Preaching. Needless to say, we will be busy right up until our departure. We offer thanks that Cy Stafford, our mission team leader, has returned safely to Arusha. We were fortunate that, while he was stateside for a whirlwind fund-raising trip, he was able to carve out a day we could enjoy some food and fellowship (that's him in the picture at the top). Cy is a true Barnabas and always leaves people encouraged and motivated to do more in the kingdom. By the time this report reaches you, Daniel and Tiffany Gaines will have arrived in Tanzania to join the team. Keep them and

their children in your prayers as they make the transition to life in a developing country. We know they are up to the challenge and are grateful for their commitment. The Gaines will be a valuable asset to the work, and we all look forward to working alongside them. Lord willing, the next time you hear from us will be from Tanzania. We solicit your prayers as we leave family, friends, and the comforts of home. Until then, take care and God bless.”

Gerald Reynolds (1973) writes, “I will be working in the 2014 Costa Rica Campaign in LaFortuna. The dates for this are January 10-17. I am excited about working again with Mark Bass, Dave Clouse, Jack Gilcrist, and Phil Gear. Mike Phillips and Tim Childs will also be a part of the mission team this year, and I look forward to meeting and getting to know these two brethren. We will take turns each night preaching the gospel using the theme: The Glorious Gospel. During the day, we will be knocking doors and conducting studies. On Sunday, the brethren plan to host afternoon sessions for the purpose of teaching and edifying the youth in LaFortuna. They have many young people that make up the congregation there which is very encouraging. The local preacher, Moises Umana is doing a great work. This will be the second year to work with him and the congregation there. Last year, our team, working with translators and members of the congregation, conducted over forty studies and had seven that were baptized into Christ. Moises Umana is a native of Costa Rica and after finishing work at a School of Preaching (Southwest in Austin, TX), he went back to work with the brethren in LaFortuna. His good wife and son assist him in doing the Lord's work there. This family could use some additional support if you can help. You can contact Mark Bass (mebass1957@aol.com) at the Alkire Road church of Christ in

Columbus, Ohio if you would like to know more about the work in LaFortuna, Costa Rica and brother Umana's needs.”

Dale DuVerney (1997) writes, “As you may know, Jerrie and I have been in Rogers City for 8 years as a part of a church plant. God has been gracious in supplying for our needs through the sacrificial support of many congregations and individuals. Because of this support, we have been able to labor full time and have accomplished a lot! Since 2005, we have grown to thirty in number, purchased our own meeting house, established a weekly jail study, conducted thirteen campaigns, conducted numberless studies, set up Sunday broadcasts of our services into a struggling congregation 40 miles away, and continue to plant and water the Gospel seed in Presque Isle County, knowing God is giving an increase! Our 2014 goals are to begin conducting campaign efforts and studies in three northern Michigan counties that do not currently have a congregation of the Lord's church: Emmet, Mackinac and Charlevoix counties. Our request from interested brethren is that they pray for this effort. Secondly, Jerrie and I have lost close to half of our monthly salary over the past year. We solicit the help of good and sound brethren who see the need for the Gospel to go into areas of our own country which have never had the Gospel before. If folks are interested in aiding us in our effort, they can contact me about my sponsoring congregation (all funds raised for this effort are overseen and distributed by a good, godly, and qualified eldership). My phone numbers are: 989-351-0405 for my cell and 989-734-9016 for the office. We send monthly reports of the work to every supporter so they can see what their support is doing in Northern Michigan. Thank you for your prayers for our efforts to reach the lost in Northern Michigan. Our prayers are with you

and the great Memphis School of Preaching.”

Stephen Higley (2010) writes, “The work in New Zealand is a challenging one, but one that is vitally important. New Zealand has a population of 4.4 million people with around 400-500 Christians in the whole country. I currently labor with the church in Foxton, New Zealand. Foxton is a tremendous place full of opportunity and potential. We are settled in between Palmerston North (30 minutes North with a population of 80,000) and Wellington metro area which extends up very close to Foxton (Wellington is the capital city of New Zealand about an hour and a half South). We having been very involved in reaching souls with the gospel. Some of the works of which I have been a part include: Foxton Campaign, Bible studies, letterboxing, handing out Bible material along the main street, event days (Friends and Family day, etc.), Toy Drive for impoverished children (in December with hopes and prayers for getting Bible studies with parents), Spring Fling festival (contacts with people from 4 regions in the lower North Island in NZ), and currently developing New Zealand-centered personal Bible study tools for evangelism. We have been having numerous visitors beginning to worship with us. I also co-ordinate a Church Workers Workshop every two months in Foxton. This workshop is designed to provide a platform of discussion on evangelism and other ways that churches throughout New Zealand are using to their benefit. This workshop is designed for Bible school teachers, preachers, leaders, all Christians. We have had people from all over the North Island attend with some traveling by plane for these workshops. Our work here in Foxton is tremendous. We are very open and willing to having short-term mission trips. To support this work: Bremen church of Christ; P.O. Box 1295; Stephen Higley Missions;

Bremen, GA 30110. Also, sign up for my monthly newsletter by sending in your e-mail address: higster45@yahoo.com. Please pray for my wife and I in this great work in the country of New Zealand.

Our Sympathy

Our sympathy is extended to the family of **Wayne Coats (1993-HA)** of Mt. Juliet, TN who passed away August 27, 2013. He was a preacher, educator, author, and the former owner of the Mt. Juliet Funeral Home and Mt. Juliet Memorial Gardens. He stood fast for the truth in the face of advancing liberalism in the Nashville area.

Special Request

Keith A Mosher Sr. (1975) has notified me that he has lost the record of all his meeting dates for 2014. If the congregation where you attend has a Gospel Meeting or speaking engagement previously scheduled with brother Mosher in 2014, he desires that you e-mail him at keithmoshersr@msop.org and confirm it. Please do so lest he fail to appear.

Reminder From The Cates Family

Dan Cates (1994) writes, “Would you mind mentioning again the catesisms@msop.org e-mail address for any wishing to share their memories of Dad. Hearing a lot of the stories and seeing people post some on Facebook was extremely encouraging to Mom, Andy, and me. Many of the stories were new to me, while others reminded me of things I had known but forgotten. Thanks so much! Dan Cates, for the family” [Please do so today!- MRM].

Have You Paid Your Dues?

MSOP alumni are asked to pay their annual \$25 voluntary dues by sending them to our treasurer Keith Mosher at MSOP or by using PAYPAL at the following address: <http://www.msop.org/alumni.php> Thank for your support of our Alumni Association!

Tribute To Curtis A Cates

Rick Lawson, President, MSOP Alumni Association

I first spoke to brother Curtis Cates when I was looking for a preaching school to attend. In the weeks leading up to Thanksgiving of 1996, brother Mike Ray and I called MSOP and spoke with brother Cates. “We would like for you to come down to northwest Florida and hold a gospel meeting for us,” Mike said to brother Cates.

He replied, “Brethren, I’m awfully busy this time of year.” Now this was about the time plans were in full swing to relocate the church from Knight Arnold to Forest Hill, and I’m sure that brother Cates was swamped with work!

We said, “Brother Cates, a couple of us are thinking about attending the Memphis School of Preaching and we thought you could come preach us a meeting and talk to us about coming to school.” Immediately he said, “WHEN DO YOU WANT ME!?”

Brother Cates came at Thanksgiving of that year and preached a fantastic meeting for us at the Blackmon church of Christ. During the evenings he preached the simple gospel in a powerful way. During the day he explained, cajoled, and recruited. He said, “We are about to move the campus to a new location, and we need preaching students with strong minds AND strong backs!” I came to love brother Cates during that gospel meeting week. He won us over, and both of our families made the decision to move to Memphis and attend MSOP. It was one of the greatest choices in my life and changed everything from that point forward.

Soon after some disgruntled brethren in my area heard that I was planning to attend MSOP, they wrote a letter to brother Cates “warning” him about me. They thought I

wouldn’t make a good student and told him all my flaws and shortcomings. Brother Cates told me about that letter, and I asked him, “Did the letter convince you to keep me out of the school?” He said, “Brother, I wrote them back and said if you were as bad as they said, I needed to get you up here to Memphis and straighten you out!”

He did straighten me out! He stood up for me when I was attacked. He taught me the Scriptures in a powerful way. He lived as a fine example of what a preacher ought to be, and he will be remembered by me as a hero of the faith. I am thankful that heaven is a place of reunion. I look forward to the day to speak with my friend again and to blend my voice with his as we sing praises to God for eternity. May God continue to bless Annette, Dan, Andy, and their families.

GBN Desires Thirty Second Video Tributes To Curtis A. Cates

The Gospel Broadcasting Network is planning to air a day-long tribute for brother Cates on Dec. 23, 2013 by running some programs that he recorded. They would like to include some video tributes during the day from people whose lives he influenced. If you are interested in participating, you can send them a video of up to 30 seconds in length that you have recorded with your digital camera, phone, or webcam. Please do not add any fades, on-screen graphics, or other effects to the video, just the raw file (as we’ll give the videos a consistent look). Please send a Facebook message or an e-mail to adam@gbntv.org, and they can arrange for delivery of your video to them via Dropbox.