



Laborers Together Newsletter

Memphis School of Preaching
Alumni Association

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

Mike McDaniel, President
Larry Powers, Recording Secretary
Volume 3, No. 2

Skip Andrews, Vice President
Keith A. Mosher Sr., Treasurer
April-July 2008

A SPLENDID LECTURESHIP

Mike McDaniel

The Forty-Second Annual Memphis School of Preaching Lectureship is now but a memory but what a wonderful memory it is. I thoroughly enjoyed it. Many reports were received from alumni. The tone of the comments went as follows: “best lectureship I can remember in a long time, loved the changes, very edifying, tremendous lessons, etc.”

Here are some of my own impressions. I thought it was great having less speakers. I know what it is to speak in the school building to a slim crowd after you have spent many hours in preparation. Having only two lectures per hour ensures that your audience will be better. It also lowers expenses.

Moving the wall over in the fellowship hall so that all the displays could be accommodated was something I have been eager to see for a long time.

Moving the Ladies' classes over to the school building eliminated shutting down the book displays for two hours each day and having to herd everyone out. You know as well as I do that it is hard to move a preacher when he is eager to buy a book!

There was definitely more family and friend time this year since we only had one dinner in the evening and several told me that they took advantage of this and appreciated it.

We want to thank the elders and brother Liddell for their thoughtfulness of us in the changes they made.

2008 ALUMNUS OF THE YEAR

Michael R. McDaniel was named the Memphis School of Preaching Alumnus of the year for 2008. I am looking at the beautiful plaque now as it adorns the wall above my computer in my study. It says: "Presented in appreciation of your outstanding work preaching the Gospel of Christ." As I said when I received it, "I do not deserve this." Anything that I have done has been a labor of love for my Lord, for the church, and for the Memphis School of Preaching.



I do deeply appreciate all of those past recipients who saw fit to bestow this honor upon me. It is quite a distinguished group, and I am humbled to be numbered among them.

My emotions got the best of me as my dear friend, Lee Davis, presented it to me. We were roommates during our second year at MSOP. It made it even more special.

Another thing that made this a special night for me was having my beloved wife, Martha, by my side at the dinner. This was the first dinner she has been able to attend the alumni friends dinner since I became President. The first of this year was extremely difficult as she underwent facial surgery to remove a cancerous tumor from one of her salivary glands. We appreciate your prayers on her behalf, and she is now doing well and is being re-checked every three months. She has been a jewel of a wife to me and deserves much of the credit for what I have been able to accomplish for the Lord since our marriage in 1990.

At the conclusion of the dinner, brother B. J. Clarke with whom I had been sitting at the head table, joked that this was the first time he had ever seen me astonished. I suppose an award probably needs to be given to Rick Lawson, chairman of the awards committee, for slipping this one past the President.

I am so thankful for the education I received at MSOP. It has served me well since graduating at the age of twenty to enter into local work. The Lord has blessed me beyond comprehension, and I give Him the glory for the opportunities for service that He has placed in my path.

List of MSOP Alumnus Of The Year Award Recipients

Melvin Hampton (1989), Dewey Medlin (1990), Rod Rutherford (1991), Jim Dearman (1992), John Barcus (1993), Skip Andrews (1994), Bobby Gayton (1995), Nick Deiger (1996), Bobby Liddell (1997), Hermon Doss (1998), Dean Gittings Jr. (1999), Ted J. Clarke (2000), Don Rhodes (2001), Jerry Martin (2002), Billy Bland (2003), Bob Spurlin (2004), Gideon Rodriguez (2005), Anthony Hixson (2006), Jeff O'Dell (2007), Michael R. McDaniel (2008).

ALUMNI, WHAT IS NEW WITH YOU?

[**Editor's Note:** The following are portions of e-mails sent to me following my request for news from our alumni. Many thanks for your help with this newsletter!]

From **Lee Davis (85)**: "We here at the North Cobb congregation in Kennesaw, Georgia, had a wonderful World Missions Weekend on the 10th and 11th of July. Brother Billy Bland did an outstanding job in raising the awareness of brethren about world missions and to outline and describe the great work that is done through the Far East World Evangelism program that is overseen by the good Coldwater church. It was an exciting weekend. It would be great if this program could be hosted in every faithful congregation in the brotherhood."

From **David Lemmons (94 - 3rd yr)**: "After 12 years with the North Marshall church of Christ near Calvert City, KY, I have moved to work with the brethren at the Dublin church of Christ in Dublin, GA. We are on I-16 between Macon and Savannah in middle Georgia. This is the church where brethren Jerry Martin and Eugene Jenkins have labored in time past. We are now about seven months into this new work and enjoying it a great deal. We have a small Hispanic work going here. We are helping to support brother Rick Owens at MSOP....In addition, I have been able (with the help of several brethren and two churches) to replace a motorcycle that was destroyed in a wreck on the island of Sulawesi in Indonesia. We also covered his medical expenses. Brother Mathias Posilambi was on his way to study with one of his prospects in the city of Kendari (using FISHERS OF MEN), when a fellow rider who was intoxicated slammed into him. Brother Mathias was knocked unconscious for a brief time. He has now fully recovered and is

continuing his work of spreading the saving message in Kendari."

From **Michael Hughes ('76)**: "...19th trip to India, occurring July 22 - August 7. The usual work of preaching and teaching with associated acts of benevolence, including medical clinics for the poor and one for a leper colony (most of the people in this leper colony have been converted to Christ). This trip is additionally highlighted by the dedication of the boys' campus of the new Fleming Tarpidu Institute in Bikkavolu, Andhra Pradesh. The Institute is a specialized children's home of purpose and vision and has been in the planning for quite some time. Accompanied on this trip by David Nance ('80), his second time to India, and also Joshua Richardson ('08), making his first trip to India. Others who are not graduates of the school will be on this missionary journey as well. Part of the trip will also have the company of a brother from the congregation where Riley Nelson ('87) preaches. Though not a part of this trip, brother Randy Vaughn ('79) is connected with this India work also. Any MSOP graduates or acquaintances of same who would like to get involved in mission work in India, whether as supporters and/or as travelers, please feel free to get in touch with me at michael@ftinstitute."

From **Trey Cook (06)**: "My wife, Amanda, and I have had a recent addition to our family. We now have three boys, Jude (almost 3 yrs. old), Jack (almost 2 yrs. old), and now James (9 weeks old). We came to school with no children, and had Jude while we were there, and were pregnant with Jack when we left. We have been blessed with working with the Gospel Broadcasting Network for quite some time now. I am the production manager and one of the editors here at GBN, and, it truly is an amazing

work!!! If you do put this in the newsletter, I would like to request that you ask the brethren to keep an eye out for us, as we are seeking some part time local work. It is wonderful and rewarding doing the Lord's work here at GBN, but I miss preaching. So we are looking for an associate work or something of that nature in the North Georgia/Chattanooga and surrounding area. Thanks again for doing what you do, and MSOP and our brethren in the Lord are in our prayers often."

From **Glen Alexander (80)**: We are all fine. Rhonda and I live in Culleoka, TN. Just west of I-65 and south of Nashville about 50 miles. I have been preaching for the Campbell Station church of Christ, 3 miles to our south, for 4 years. Our attendance run between 30-40. The country living here is great. Andrew our youngest is 18 and a senior this year at Culleoka school, where Rhonda also works. Benji and Nathan have jobs and are doing fine. We continue to thank MSOP and all the faithful brethren labouring for His Cause!"

From **Bobby Liddell (79)**: Bobby and Joan Liddell had their fifth grandchild on May 19th. His name is Garrett Sayle. Parents are Stephen and Keri (Liddell) Sayle.

From **Bobby O'Dell (95)**: "I recently bought a preacher's library (a little over 1,000 books), and I am selling most of it off. I have started listing the books on ebay. I am listing about 10-12 books a day. Many of these are books that I believe graduates of MSOP would be interested in....My seller ID is 1975gobucks *[I am guessing that the word "bucks" stands for Ohio buckeyes rather than Bobby going for "bucks" or money in selling these books as this man once desecrated my former study at Greenfield, TN with an Ohio State flag - MRM.]* for those who are interested looking for the books. Most of them are listed very cheap - about \$5 each.

From **Jack Openshaw (70)**: "I am

new at the cyber space tech. so be patient with me. I am from the second graduating class of the M.S.O.P. (1968-1970). We were the class that began at Getwell and made the move to Knight Arnold. Leona (my wife) and I moved to Niagara Falls, New York a year and a half (1 ½) ago from Northeastern Ohio. I preach and work with the LaSalle congregation here at the Falls. We are an older congregation ("graying flock") predominately. The congregation recently celebrated its 62nd anniversary with a "homecoming." Nevertheless, we are "strong in the Lord and the power of His might" (Eph.6:10), and steadfast in "preaching the Word" (Matt.28:18-20)! Our annual V.B.S. is coming up in August this year and a fall Gospel Meeting is being planned. We are looking into means of outreach in our community as well as going into all the world. If any of you are up our way "drop over" anytime; we are minutes from the Falls. I had complete knee replacement surgery last winter and will likely have the other one this fall or winter."

From **Eugene Jenkins (80)**: Luvenia and I have indeed moved this year. After 28 years of full time preaching (having graduated from MSOP in June of 1980), the last 14 & 1/2 years with the Oak Grove congregation in Oak Grove, Missouri, we decided to step out in faith and begin doing more mission work. We bought a home in Buckner, Missouri and are presently making appointments with individuals and congregations that might be interested in supporting us in our new work. We are blessed to work part time with the River Valley congregation in Blackwater, Missouri. They allow me to be gone as much as needed in order to fulfill appointments to raise funds, or to do planned mission work. Working under the moniker, "CAMPAIGNS FOR CHRIST THROUGH WORLD MISSIONS, we will - as funds allow - expand

our work on the island of Jamaica, do campaign work in other countries, and help congregations in stateside campaigns. We need prayers and finances. Interested individuals or congregations are encouraged to contact us as follows: Eugene and Luvenia Jenkins, 303 Manor Lane, Buckner, MO 64016...My e-mail address is: dejenk@juno.com.

From **Joey Davis (04)**: Joey Davis has relocated to the Atlanta church of Christ in Atlanta, Texas.

From **Joshua Ankiah (01)**: "Yes, I would like to put out some information about my family and I and our goal to be in South Africa at least by next year doing missionary work. I have been the full time minister for Pasadena church of Christ (1 1/2 years) and Coastline church of Christ (nearly) 4 years. Currently I am a contract worker working as a Design Engineer for AT&T in California. My family and I attend the Temple City church of Christ where I also preach on a part time basis. We are looking for a sponsoring church for the work to Durban, South Africa. There is a definite need in Durban. More information about goals and objectives can be provided upon request to those who may be interested."

From **Ben Wright (97)**: "Jincy and I are expecting our third child who is due in February. Braden and Blake are the excited big brothers. Also, during our week of camp at Indian Creek Youth Camp, there were fifteen baptisms and forty restorations. [*Wonderful News!- MRM*]. Ronnie Hayes is the director of this week."

From **Jerry Wellborn (85)**: "Rachel and I are working in a ministry to families. . . . Visit our blog at stepsofpurpose.blogspot.com . . . We are eager to be a blessing to as many as we can. I am preaching in Louisville, MS. We are looking for ministry opportunities in MS and the

surrounding states."

From **Ronnie Crocker (93)**: I presently preach for the City Boulevard church of Christ in Waycross, Georgia. In October we initiated the Project Rescue Addiction Recovery Program (www.projectrescue.org). We reach out to members of the churches of Christ caught in the snare of alcohol and drug addiction. We have 2 facilities (an apartment building and duplex) to house the program members as they participate in our 90-day program. We presently have 7 men in the program from various places (Alabama, Georgia, Indiana, Florida (2), and New Mexico)."

From **Robert Notgrass (05)**: "I am pleased to announce that I will be moving to work with the Maryville Church of Christ in Maryville, MO. Address: Robert Notgrass, 511 S. Saunders St., Maryville, MO. 64468.

From **Rick Lawson (99)**: "After nearly a decade of preaching in West Tennessee (most recently Gardner), on June 1, 2008 I began working with the Sunset church of Christ in Nashville, AR. My good friend and classmate David Williams ('99) is the pulpit preacher, and my main area of focus is personal evangelism and outreach. Pray for me and my family as we strive to spread the gospel of Christ in Southwest Arkansas."

From **Patrick Harper (01)**: "We established a congregation in Brighton, Illinois, September, 2007 worshiping out of one of the members home (Rodney and Robin White). By November, we had moved into Brighton North Elementary School for our Sunday Bible classes and worship, while still maintaining our Wednesday evening worship at the White's house. This arrangement lasted until June 1st, when the congregation purchased Brighton's old library building to use as the congregation's meeting house. It is a small cinder block structure of

approximately 600 square feet. While it is not large, the facility's space will allow us to seat at least fifty people (if pressed, one hundred people could be seated but everybody would have to love their neighbor). Pews were purchased from an denominational building that had been sold to Muslims for use as a community center in St. Louis. We are in the process of putting a new steel roof over the building's existing rock and tar roof (which leaks every time it rains). We do not have a baptistry yet. Our plan is to build an addition in the near future which will not only supply that need, but also give us an area to use as both classroom space and a fellowship hall. At our first meeting as a congregation we had twenty-two people present. This past Sunday worship included thirty souls. We had two baptisms last year (which were accomplished in a member's swimming pool)"

I received this back on June 2nd **from Danny Butler (90):** "We have been informed that the result of Wanda's recent CT scan showed NO ABNORMALITIES. Her family doctor will begin to monitor her condition. She is doing well and returning to her old self slowly. It will take a while for the medicine to be regulated. We appreciate your prayers and are humbled that God answered them in such a wonderful way. We still solicit your prayers in our work for an awesome and wonderful God."

From **Dustin Forthun (99):** "On June 1, I began a new work as the pulpit preacher for the Garden City church of Christ in Garden City, Michigan. Garden City is a small community on the west side of Detroit. The congregation has a solid reputation in this area and is under the oversight of two capable elders. We are involved in many good works here, including our annual Michigan Bible Lectureship (conducted each August) which is available for viewing online. Garden City

continues to be a strong supporter of MSOP, and I am proud to join several other alumni in doing the Lord's work in this area."

From Peter Chinn (06): Greetings to you from sunny Singapore. Upon graduating from MSOP in 2006, I taught for 6 months there before leaving to begin work as a full time instructor and Dean of Academics at Four Seas College in Singapore. Four Seas College of Bible & Missions held its 1st Annual Four Seas Lectureship, on the theme 'Church Growth', from June 1-5, 2008 (Sunday through Thursday). A total of 140 members attended the 5 day lectures. These lectures were conducted at the Jurong church building, Singapore. The Lord blessed us with a wonderful time of fellowship with brethren from more than 20 congregations from the United States, China, Taiwan, India, Nepal, Australia, Malaysia and Singapore. Twenty-six excellent lessons were presented on "Church Growth" including 4 daily classes especially for the ladies. Field reports on mission work and growth of churches were presented by those laboring in Australia, Russia, India, Nepal, Malaysia and Singapore. Included in the daily program was the "Question & Answer Forum" where many Bible questions were raised and answered by a panel of two speakers. The average daily attendance during the lectureship was about 95. Among those on the panel of speakers were brethren Billy Bland (Class of 1977), Lennie Reagan (Class of 1995), Gary Young (Class of 1990), Philip Vanwinkle (Class of 2005), Paul Praschnik (Class of 2006), Peter Chin (Class of 2006), Chris Kramer (Class of 2009). Brethren Billy Bland and Lennie Reagan each did a wonderful job in preaching during the evening Gospel Meeting. Sermons on the theme of "The Church" were delivered each night that saw an average attendance of about 120 with the highest attendance at 140

on Wednesday night. Many visitors attended and some for the first time at the Jurong church building. Brethren from churches in Malaysia (Ipoh, Kuala Lumpur, Cheras, Damansara Utama, Subang Jaya, Klang, Melaka, Johor Bahru) and Singapore (Jurong, Lim Ah Pin Rd.) came to support the meeting each night. We were thrilled that one member rededicated herself, one was restored after having left the church for many years, and another obeyed the gospel on the last evening. We praise God for these responses . . . Your labor of love in producing the newsletter is appreciated. It is a wonderful way to be updated on the work and well-being of MSOP graduates through the newsletter.”

Rod Rutherford (74) tells me that he will be leaving next week on a mission trip to Malawi. Let’s remember him in our prayers. We enjoyed visiting with Rod and Brenda and worshiping with them in Gatlinburg during our vacation. If you are heading to the mountains, please keep them in mind when its time to worship.

Michael Gilbert (00) had surgery this past Monday in Texas. He is now awaiting his test results from a biopsy. I would ask that you remember him and his family in your prayers at this time.

And lastly from the editor, **Mike McDaniel (85)**: I have had a very busy summer with the work of the *A Bible Answer* television program since the departure of Dustin Forthun and Rick Lawson from the state of Tennessee within a few days of one another. However, a deacon at Gardner in Martin volunteered to take over the literature work which Rick had been doing. Also, a deacon at Phillips Street in Dyersburg has taken over the financial aspects of the work which Dustin has been handling. *A Bible Answer* continues to impact portions of five states through air time on Fox, CW., TCT, and

Lion’s Club stations as well as over the internet. Many thanks to many of our alumni in the area who serve as panelists in answering viewer’s questions. We have just gotten caught up with our internet archives. Please go to www.oabs.org and click on the *A Bible Answer* link to go to our web page. There you will find our archives from 2004 until the present and will be able to watch the video through Windows Media Player. You can also find Audio downloads for WMA players for those of you who like to listen while walking for exercise. I have served as an instructor for the Online Academy of Biblical Studies since 2002. Brethren Larry Powers (88) and Lee Davis (85) also serve as instructors. We are now registering students at www.oabs.org. This is a four year Saturday school for anyone with a zeal for God’s Word. Please inform your members about it and ask them to investigate our curriculum. I teach in front of a camera and the feed is streamed live over the internet. There is a twenty second delay between my spoken word, and its being heard by my students around the world. They can then ask me questions by means of a chat-room. We use special class software which provides links to upload and download resources, assignments, research papers, and exams. The Forum feature allows me to send out e-mails to all students automatically. They are also told when I have given them a grade. This technology is phenomenal, and I really enjoy teaching with it. I teach second year students Hebrews from January through May and New Testament Church from August through December. Fall classes begin August 2nd.

It is definitely encouraging to read of what God is doing through our alumni. As you seek to do His will, may He richly bless you in every good word and work.

2008 MSOP ALUMNI BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Among our old business: the motion was made and approved to amend The Constitution and Bylaws of the Alumni of the Memphis School of Preaching Article VII Terms of Office, Section 1. It has been amended to read: "The president, and vice president shall serve for two years and may be re-elected for only one additional term."

It was decided to put portions of brother Hearn's unfinished autobiography on the MSOP web site.

Among our new business: Brother Joe Nichols (69) donated 500 copies of his book "Letting the Bible Speak and other Teaching Articles." The book sells for \$5.00 and all the proceeds go to the Alumni Fund. We greatly appreciate this very generous gesture on the part of brother Nichols!

The motion was made and approved to present the MSOP secretaries with a \$50.00 gift card from the Cracker Barrel Restaurant. The gift cards were presented at the Alumni dinner.

The motion was made and approved to give \$1,000.00 from the Alumni fund to the building fund.

Motions were made and approved to select brother Jim Crowe (elder at Forest Hill) and brother Tom Holland (distinguished preacher of the gospel) as Honorary Alumni of the Memphis School of Preaching.

The motion was made and approved to elect Michael McDaniel to another term as president of the Memphis School of Preaching Alumni Association.

The motion was made and approved to give a copy of brother Hearn's sermon book and a copy of *Rejoice & Weep* to each MSOP student.

Our meeting began around noon on Tuesday of the lectureship and adjourned at 1:15 P.M. Thirty-two alumni were present for this meeting. This was an excellent number, and we were grateful for a very good and productive board meeting.

MSOP APARTMENT DEBT CONTINUES TO DWINDLE

Brother Liddell has informed me that the amount of debt left on the apartments now stands at around **\$440,000**. That is down from around \$800,000 at lectureship time. Obviously, this is a cause of rejoicing when you consider the fact that we started with an amount of **\$3.5 million dollars**. Brethren, the amount is dwindling. We must keep working to see this amount decrease and decrease and decrease until it disappears into nothingness.

During the entirety of my first term as

President of the Alumni Association, we have been working on the elimination of this debt. We produced a video in 2006 and yet another in 2007 to send out to interested individuals along with letters. Informational dinners have been conducted around the country. Alumni have worked hard and their efforts are greatly appreciated.

Let us all re-double our efforts in the last half of 2008 to make this debt disappear!