

Convention Updates

2013 FREE WILL BAPTIST NATIONAL CONVENTION

SUNDAY, JULY 21, 2013 | TAMPA, FLORIDA

TRANSITIONS IN TAMPA

Welcome to Tampa! This week, approximately 5,000 Free Will Baptists from across the nation will storm the beautiful Gulf Coast city to conduct the business of the denomination. This city on the western coast of the Florida peninsula was first established as Fort Brooke in 1824, only five years after the United States purchased the territory from Spain.

Tampa has grown from a remote military outpost to become a large, productive city sprawling along the shores of the Gulf of Mexico. With 2.7 million people in the greater Tampa Bay area, it is the third most populated city in Florida and a favorite destination for many.

When the convention last met in Tampa in 2003, the meeting was characterized by transition. Tim York was elected moderator, and Keith Burden offered his first official report as executive secretary. Ten years later, the convention is again in transition, with changes to several key convention staffers—changes that will be highlighted throughout the week in the *Convention Update*.

Despite these “transitions in Tampa,” some things will never change. Free Will Baptists come to the convention for encouraging worship, uplifting fellowship, and good, old-fashioned fun. With that in mind, consider a few suggestions for making the most of a great week in *The Big Guava*. (Yes...Tampa is nicknamed for a tropical fruit!)

Getting Around

Traversing downtown Tampa can be fun. A quarter will buy you a ride on the Intown Trolley Line (<http://www.gohart.org>), or take a restored historic streetcar to

most important downtown locations (<http://www.tecolin-streetcar.org>). Fares range from \$1.25 to \$5.00. All-day family passes are also available. Show your convention badge to the streetcar driver for a free ride.

For beautiful views of the downtown skyline, enjoy a ride in a water taxi. The taxis service most hotels, Harbour Island, Convention Center, Performing Arts Center, and Waterfront Park (<http://www.watertaxitampa.com>).

Food Fast

You will soon discover that fast food is not easily accessible from the Tampa Convention Center. With that in mind, the center has provided moderately priced food kiosks throughout the facility. Show appreciation for their effort by visiting the kiosks when possible. However, if you (or your youth group) simply cannot live without _____, you will find five popular fast food options within a mile:

- McDonald's (.4 miles) 2 Columbia Dr (at Tampa General Hospital)
- Jimmy Johns (.5 miles) 514 N Franklin St
- Quizno's Subs (.4 miles) 302 E Kennedy Blvd
- Chick-fil-A (.6 miles) 401 W Kennedy Blvd
- Nathan's Hot Dogs (.8 miles) 200 N Tampa St

During the week, keep your eyes open for food trucks parked throughout downtown Tampa to sample some authentic flavors of the area without breaking the bank. For Cuban flavor, take the trolley to Ybor City.

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Volunteer Army

By Convention Manager Ryan Lewis

Take a deep breath...you made it! Whether you traveled by plane, train, or automobile, I'm glad you decided to join us for the 77th annual convention of the National Association of Free Will Baptists in beautiful Tampa, Florida. As you enjoy the variety of events this year, I encourage you to take a moment to thank those who help make all of it possible.

After each convention, I look back and wonder how a full-time staff of seven (with many responsibilities beyond the convention) could manage such a large undertaking. The truth is simple: we can't. Every year, I am amazed by the number of people who attend the convention with the sole purpose of serving.

It takes an army of volunteers to carry out this meeting. Much of the work begins before the first attendee arrives in Tampa. The host state Steering Committee works to promote the convention and prepare to host 5,000+ people. The Executive Committee and Music Commission work to select a theme, speakers, and music, and to plan each service.

Once onsite, college interns and a host of other volunteers unload tractor trailer-loads of equipment and begin moving things into place. Impact Tampa, held the Saturday before the convention, runs solely on the work of volunteers who arrive early and give up free time to serve local Free Will Baptist congregations and their communities. When registration opens on Saturday, volunteers staff many of the stations, and many of them continue their work throughout the week.

During worship services, interpreters, musicians, and ushers offer their talents to ensure that things run smoothly. Photographers capture unforgettable moments of fellowship and happy reunions. Other volunteers spend the week simply “plugging in” where needed.

By week's end, I realize how little I worry about the details of the convention. This incredible volunteer army carries out responsibilities throughout the week—jobs I wouldn't even know how to start. It's a good thing there's no “I” in “team.”

About the Writer: Ryan Lewis is executive administrator for the National Association of Free Will Baptists.

Big Fun (continued from page one)

You will have no problem finding exciting ways to spend free time. Beautiful white sand beaches are only a short ride away. Kids will be mesmerized by the Tampa Aquarium (www.flaquarium.org/), home to everything from sharks to penguins. Glazer Children's Museum (www.glazermuseum.org) provides interactive exhibits for young ones. And for history buffs, the Tampa Bay History Center (www.tampabayhistorycenter.org) provides a firsthand look into the area's rich history.

Remember, host cities often remember Christian conventions for the wrong reasons. As you enjoy this year's convention, remember the following to make this convention a positive experience for everyone:

Around the City

- + Tip the valet (once, either going or coming).
- + Tip your servers (at least 15%).
- + Be quiet in your hotel after 10 p.m.
- + Don't travel alone and carry limited cash.
- + Tip your housekeeper.

At the Convention

- + Pray for the speakers and attend worship services.
- + Enjoy the exhibits.
- + Thank someone from Florida for their hard work!
- + Cheer on your kids at competition.
- + Attend convention business sessions.
- + Take time to meet a missionary.

Sunday Speakers

Florida native **Tim Owen** has been pastor of Piney Grove Free Will Baptist Church, his home church, since 2000. A 1982 graduate of Welch College, Tim was ordained in 1987. He is a member of the Board of Randall House Publications and is moderator of the Florida State Association.

A 1978 graduate of Welch College, **Randy Riggs** says he "has been honored and humbled to serve the wonderful people at Good Springs Free Will Baptist Church for 22 years." Riggs is moderator of the Tennessee State Association. He and his wife Beverly have four children, six grandchildren, and number seven on the way.

Donnie Miles, a graduate of Welch College, was ordained to the ministry March 24, 1974. He served as youth and music minister in Beaufort, Durham, and Greenville, North Carolina. He has been senior pastor of Peace Free Will Baptist Church in Florence, South Carolina, since 1990. In addition to his pastorate, he is volunteer chaplain for Carolina Hospital Systems in Florence.

Kimmel Book Signing on Monday Night

Dr. Tim Kimmel, executive director of Family Matters, will speak at the NYC service on Monday night and will sign books after the service. Kimmel will also offer a workshop on Tuesday morning at 9:00 a.m. based on his latest book *Connecting Church & Home*.

DON'T MISS THIS! Make plans for the following events scheduled for tomorrow.

American Idol? The Christian and Sports

Monday, 10:00 am | TCC 16

Greg Ketteman, provost at Welch College, examines the uneasy relationship between the Church and sports in American culture. He provides practical guidelines to keep sports in proper perspective.

Technology Tips for Pastors

Monday, 2:00 p.m. | TCC 7

Are you a dinosaur living in the technological age? Have you wondered if Facebook is what happens when a bookcase falls on you, or if Twitter is what results from drinking too much caffeine? If so, this seminar is for

you! Pastor Rodney Holloman will share great tips for making technology an effective tool in your ministry.

Children's Ministry Panel

Monday, 4:00 p.m. | TCC 5/6

If you are involved in children's ministry, enjoy a great opportunity to hear from children's ministry leaders who want to share and answer your questions.

FWB 21 Panel

Monday, 9:00 p.m. | TCC 10-12

The panel will discuss "Homosexuality and the church." The first 50 people to attend will receive a free book!

News, Updates & Announcements

General Board to Meet

The General Board will meet Monday, July 22, at 8:00 a.m. in Grand Ballroom A-E of the Marriott Waterside Hotel.

Registration and Exhibits

The exhibit hall will open Monday, July 22, at 3:00 p.m. in the Central Hall of Tampa Convention Center. Registration is open daily 8:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m., TCC Lobby.

Take the Convention Home

Stop by the Convention Recordings Counter at Registration to purchase recordings of services and seminars. CDs are \$5 each; DVDs are \$10 each.

Board of Retirement Welcomes Guidestone

Guidestone representative Tyler Tracy will be available in the Board of Retirement exhibit throughout the week.

Foundation to Sponsor Estate Planning Dinner

Free Will Baptist Foundation will sponsor a free estate planning dinner on Tuesday evening at 4:30. Space is still available. Visit the Foundation exhibit for tickets.

Music Rehearsals

The **Convention Orchestra and Praise Team** will meet on the main stage each day at 4:00 p.m. (3:30 p.m. Sunday).

Convention Choir rehearsals will be held each evening on the main convention stage:

Sunday 5:30 - 6:30

Monday 5:30 - 6:30

Tuesday 5:45 - 6:30

Wednesday (no rehearsal)

The worship leader, praise team, band, and orchestra will meet following each evening service at 8:40 p.m.