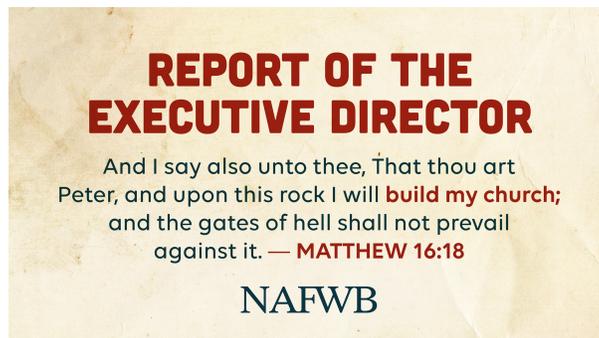




Thank you, Brother Moderator. I want to thank you for your prayers during the passing of my parents. Thank you also for the donations to the Executive Office in their memory. We will use those resources well.

You will find my report on **page 3 of the Digest**. You have also received some documents which provide a **snapshot** of each state, a report on our **counseling** program, and information about the **convention**. These reports can also be downloaded by using the QR code on your screen.



Jesus said, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

When I think of the Allied effort during World War II, I tend to think of the **16 million people** who served in the military.



It is easy to forget the total war effort that involved rationing, recycling, and producing materials needed to fight the war. The United States became an industrial giant during World War II, producing planes, ships, tanks, jeeps, and battleships.

We can draw similarities between this total war effort and the efforts of the National Association of Free Will Baptists (NAFWB)



to build churches by reaching people with the gospel, training them in the Christian faith, and giving ourselves wholly to the Lord. As a denomination, we have been doing these things for 90 years. **Are we in a good position to do it for another 90 years, should the Lord tarry?**

The IM Board recently appointed eight new missionaries to the field.

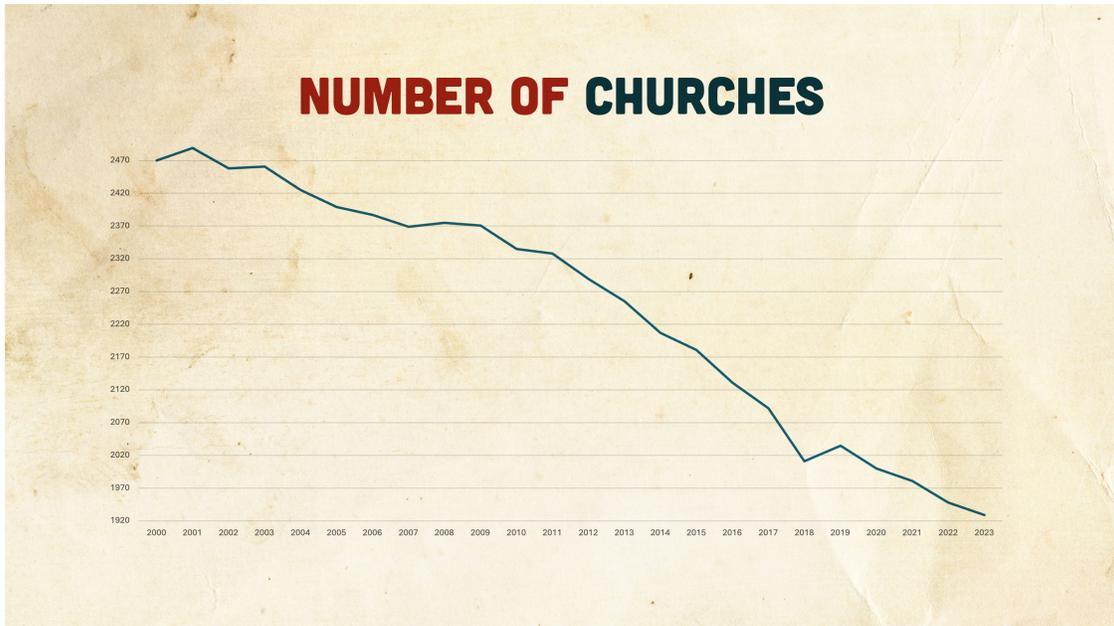


Antioch, Tennessee—On April 14-15, 2025, the IM board met together to celebrate how IM is **moving toward a new horizon as we continue the mission.**

Clint Morgan, IM General Director, presented a strategic plan outlining IM's 10-Year Horizon Goals:

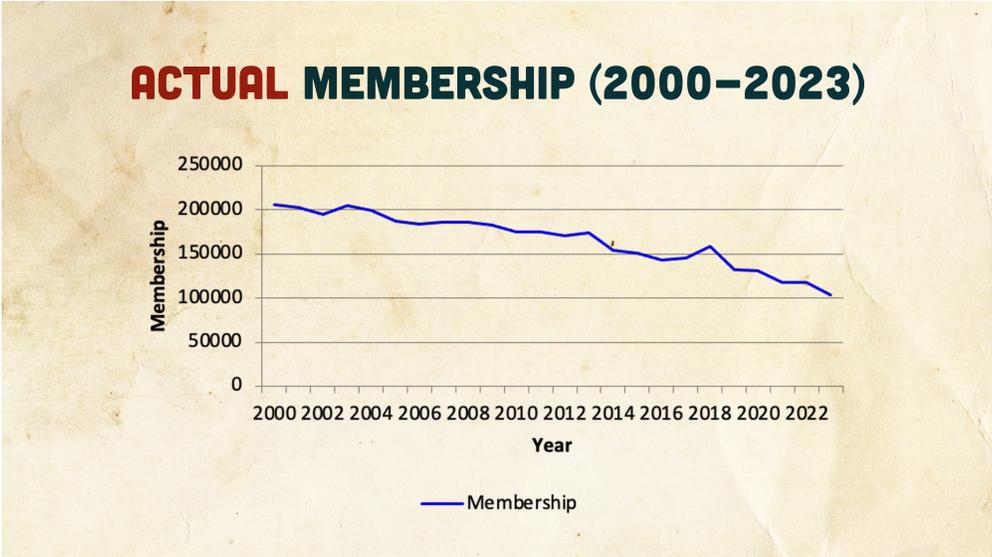
1. Commission 100 new missionaries
2. Achieve IM's three major financial goals

This is an exciting occasion. I have no doubt Free Will Baptists will rise to the occasion and support these new missionaries. However, will we be able to **keep** these missionaries on the field?

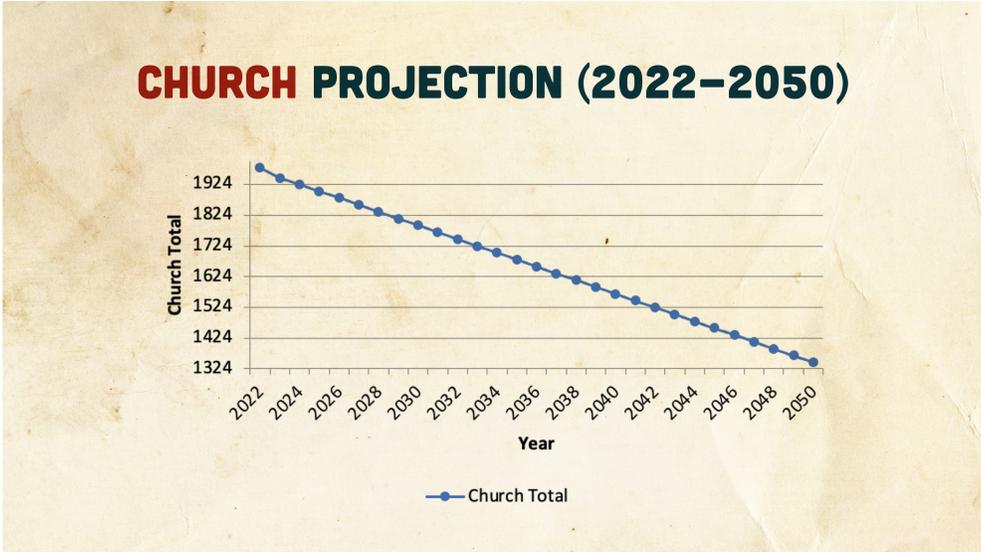


On your screen is a chart showing the downward **trend** of Free Will Baptist churches over the last **23 years.**

Similarly, we can see a downward **trend** in members.



The NAFWB is losing an average of **20 churches** and **7,544** members a year. If this **trend** continues, the picture will be similar to the one on the screen.



Suppose our newest missionary candidates serve **thirty years**. It is critical the NAFWB be strong to keep advancing missions work on the field and sending out and supporting the next generation of missionaries. However, if the current **trend** continues, it is unlikely we can sustain a similar effort in **2050**. We need revival. We would be wise to intervene and do what we can to reverse this **trend**, but how?

FOCUS ON THE PASTOR AND CHURCH HEALTH

The **labourer** is worthy
of his hire ...
— **LUKE 10:7**

NAFWB

I suggest we Focus on Pastor and Church Health. Jesus said, *The labourer is worthy of his hire...*

During World War II,



WWII FIELD HOSPITAL

Caring for the
wounded on
the field.

when a service member was injured or a ship damaged, those around them sprang into action. Medics tended to the injured service member. Beyond that, U.S. military medical personnel made great advancements in caring for the wounded with the development of field hospitals and stateside facilities.

How Floating "Repair Yards" Helped the U.S. Navy Win in the Pacific

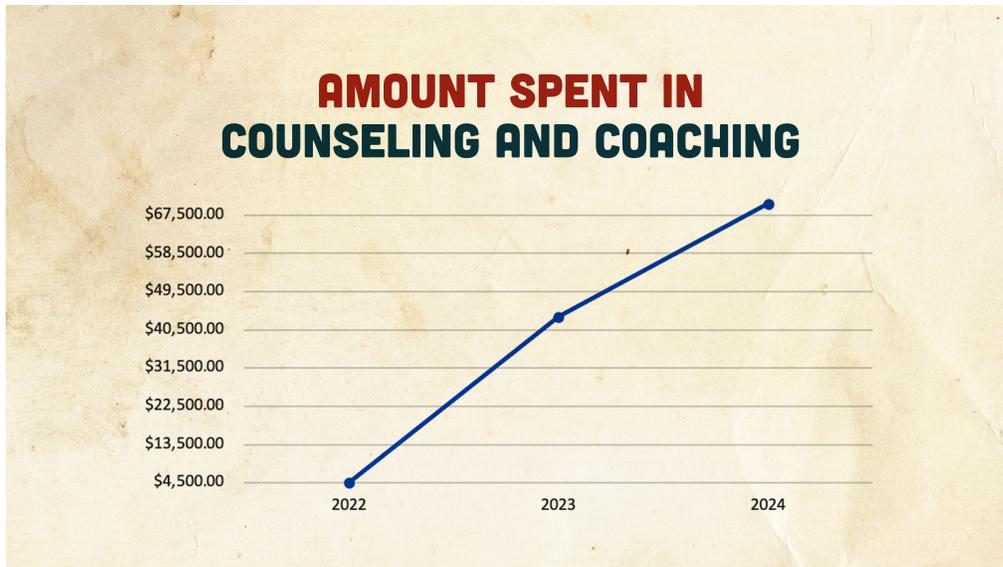


The battleship USS Iowa (BB-51) in a floating drydock at Manus Island, Admiralty Islands, 28 December 1944. (U.S. Navy)
PUBLISHED APR 15, 2021 10:58 PM BY CIMSEC

When battleships or other equipment were damaged, they were taken to a dry dock for repairs.

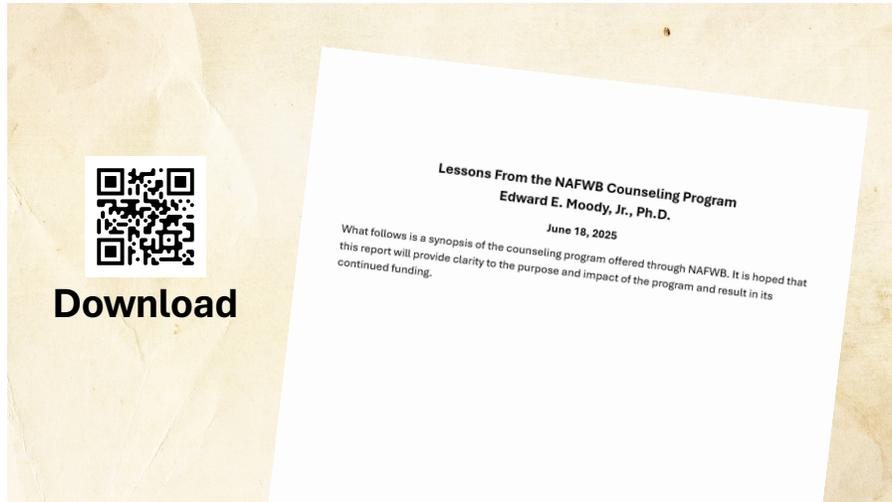
Do we engage in the same kinds of care for our pastors and churches? What happens when a church or pastor struggles? To fail to provide support and counseling is like leaving a wounded soldier on the battlefield or a damaged battleship at sea. They would have to continue the fight in a weakened condition.

Some might think pastors and churches do not need help.

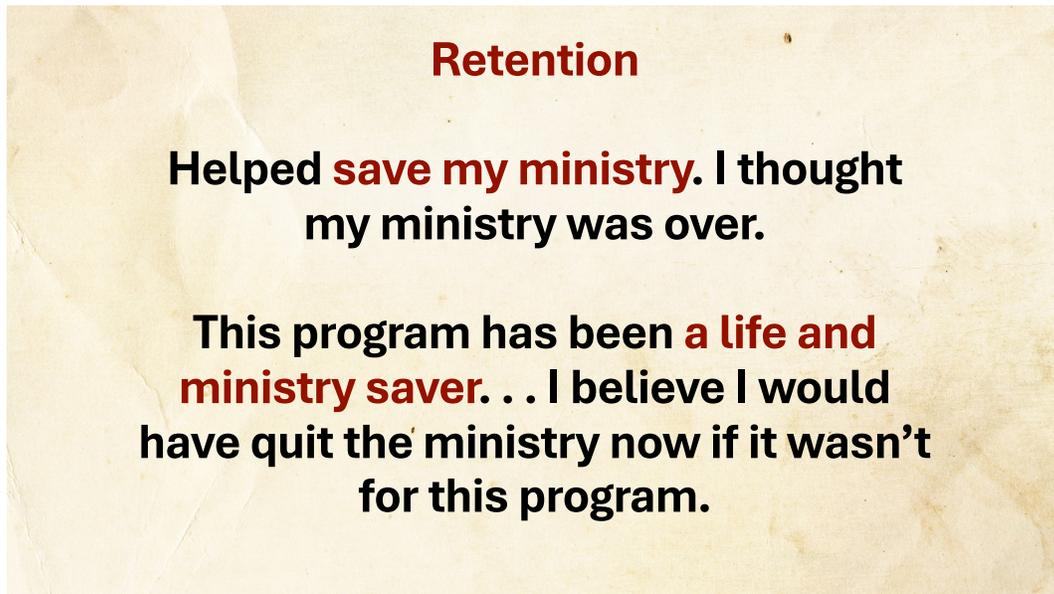


Our data suggests pastors and churches utilize resources when they are available. Note the chart on your screen showing expenditures on counseling and coaching resources.

In 2022, we spent **\$4,500** on counseling and coaching. As awareness of these programs has grown, so has utilization. The costs for counseling and coaching rose to **\$67,500 in 2024**. We believe these interventions have helped alleviate the pastor shortage and helped many churches grow stronger.



In our most recent survey of participants in the counseling program several themes emerged.



First, many pastors indicated the program helped save their ministry and that they would not be in the ministry without it.

The program helped many at very difficult times in their ministry.

**I don't know where I would be if
I did not have this resource
available to me.**

**In the most difficult time of nearly 26
years of ministry, and the serious
consideration of walking away, this
opportunity became a vital piece in
my decision to continue.**

This ministry has enabled us to keep pastors and their wives in the ministry, just like WWII hospitals helped keep military personnel alive. This ministry is directly addressing the pastor shortage problem.

Secondly, many indicate that their marriages have greatly benefited, and some even say saved.

Marriage

**I didn't even know this ministry
existed—but I can say with full
honesty without it, I don't know
where my marriage, my faith, or my
mental health would be right now. . .**

Others talk of the benefit to their marriage.

**I appreciate this gift. It saved me
and my marriage.**

This program . . . Saved my marriage . . .

**This has been a truly great program for
me and my wife. We have benefited
from this resource.**

Third, pastors and their wives say sometimes they have nowhere to go . . .

A Safe Place

**Thank you . . . for offering this
wonderful resource! Pastors don't
feel like they have anywhere to go to
work through issues.**

And that they say . . .

The program has provided a safe place to open up and talk through some things that have been an obstacle in my personal life and ministry.

It is great to have an outlet to share my concerns with.

Need a safe place.

And they are so thankful . . .

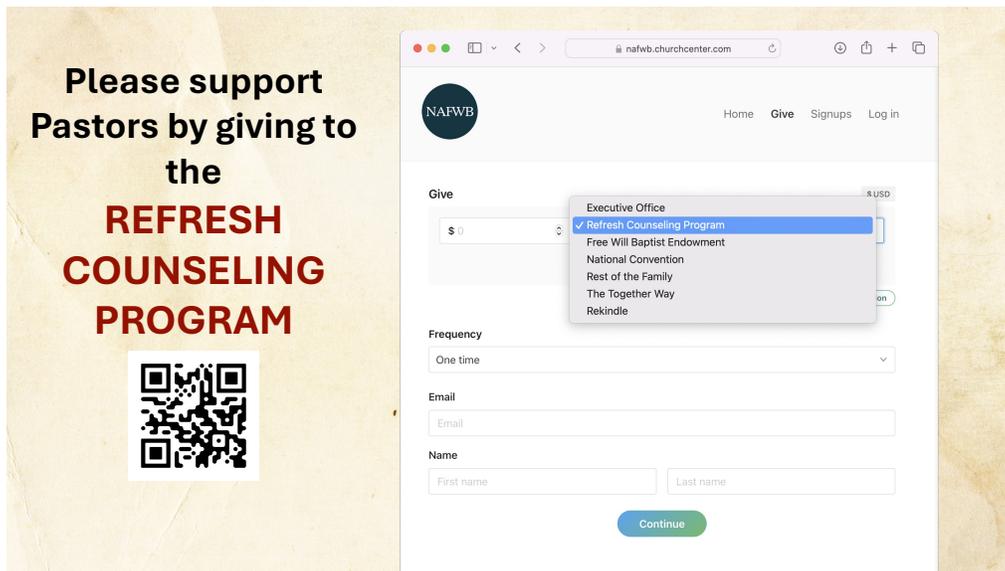
Thankful

Blessed to receive such high quality counseling without having to worry about the cost.

I am extremely appreciative to the FWB denomination. This has been fantastic! It's a blessing.

Many state they could not afford to get help, and they express their appreciation and desire that others might receive this resource. In this survey, 100% of the participants indicated the program was helpful and 93% said it was very or extremely helpful. This ministry works!

Jesus said the “labourer is worthy of his hire.” We have started saying, “The laborer is worthy of help.”



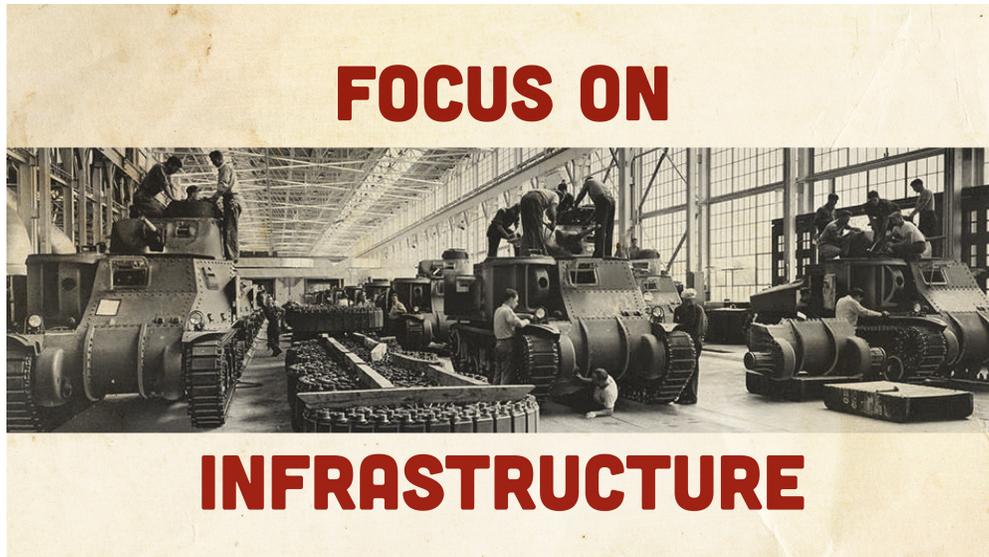
We are on pace to spend over **\$100,000 on counseling alone** for pastors, their wives, and in special situations, their children. This seems like a lot, but ask yourself, **“How have Free Will Baptists invested in pastors and churches?”** **One of the reasons I believe we have a pastor shortage is because we have not made pastors a priority.**

Let’s make pastors a priority! Please give so we can continue ministering. We believe helping pastors and their families is a key to reversing the loss of pastors. We believe coaching is a key to helping churches not just survive but thrive.



Healthy pastors will lead to healthy churches and a healthy denomination.

I suggest we Focus on Infrastructure.



The World War II period saw the largest migration of people in U.S. history, as people moved to industrial centers to build materials necessary to win the war. The U.S. outpaced her enemies in production. By 1945, the U.S. had over **90,000 ships, 86,000 tanks, and nearly 300,000 aircraft**. Some have said the war was won in the factory. **What is the infrastructure Free Will Baptists must support to build churches and sustain our efforts on the mission field?**

I suggest we focus on the Convention.



A major component of the NAFWB is the annual convention. At the convention, we commission missionaries, showcase young people, engage in educational activities, conduct our business, and gather for fellowship and worship. Because of online streaming, even those unable to attend in person reap the benefits.

For comparison purposes, **5.1% of Free Will Baptists attended the 2023** convention in Raleigh.



This is a much higher percentage than other denominations. For example: although Southern Baptists have larger conventions (roughly 18,000 attendees) only **about .13%** of their congregants attend the convention. Our convention plays a **significant** role in the life of the NAFWB.

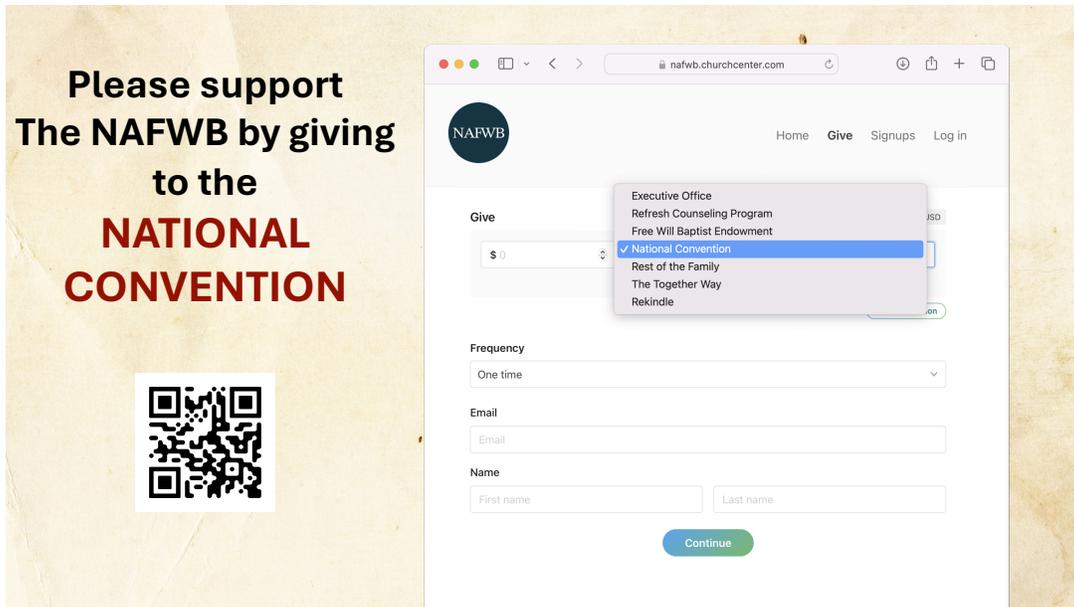
Last year, I reported to the General Board about convention deficits.

CONVENTION DEFICIT ANALYSIS

<i>Year</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Cost</i>	<i>Church Fees</i>	<i>State Contribution</i>	<i>Exhibitor Fees</i>	<i>Convention Offering</i>	<i>Other Income</i>	<i>Outcome</i>
2019	Cincinnati	\$468,081	\$297,915	\$40,000	\$36,616	\$7,046	\$2,630	-\$84,324
2021	Memphis	\$435,278	\$336,442	\$40,000	\$34,000	\$5,952	\$8,400	-\$10,484
2022	Birmingham	\$500,572	\$340,900	\$40,000	\$41,700	\$8,204	\$2,334	-\$74,081
2023	Raleigh	\$517,338	\$331,100	\$40,000	\$41,450	\$18,408	\$3,993	-\$85,974
2024	Tampa	\$546,315	\$324,554	\$30,000	\$45,539	\$30,397	\$84,003	-\$31,822

From 2019 until last year, we ran on a deficit of around \$80,000 each year. Last year, we received \$50,000 from North American Ministries (NAM) and nearly \$31,000 in convention offerings. We only ran a deficit of \$31,822.

This year, NAM has given another \$60,000. Yet, we still need another \$41,000 to break even. With this in mind, we ask Free Will Baptists to designate giving to the Convention.



Giving is necessary to put us on firm footing for future conventions.

FUTURE CONVENTION EXPENSES

Since 2019, we have run an average deficit of \$57,377 each year, which is unsustainable. Below is a projection of costs for conventions scheduled through 2028.

<i>Year</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Cost</i>	<i>Church Fees</i>	<i>State Contribution</i>	<i>Exhibitor Fees</i>	<i>Convention Offering</i>	<i>Other Income</i>	<i>Outcome</i>
2025	Kansas City	\$574,239	\$385,000	\$40,000	\$47,850	\$17,502	\$60,000 (NAM)	-\$23,887
2026	Columbus	\$681,850	\$385,000	\$40,000	\$50,243	\$18,377	??	-\$188,230
2027	Grand Rapids	\$631,662	\$385,000	\$25,000	\$52,755	\$19,296	??	-\$149,612
2028	Little Rock	\$663,245	\$437,625	\$40,000	\$55,392	\$20,261	??	-\$109,967

It is important to make changes now so that we might continue to hold future National Conventions.

When you give to the convention, you not only support this years convention but you are helping pay for next years convention and conventions in the future.

I suggest we focus on Curriculum, Colleges, and Camps

CURRICULUM, COLLEGES & CAMPS

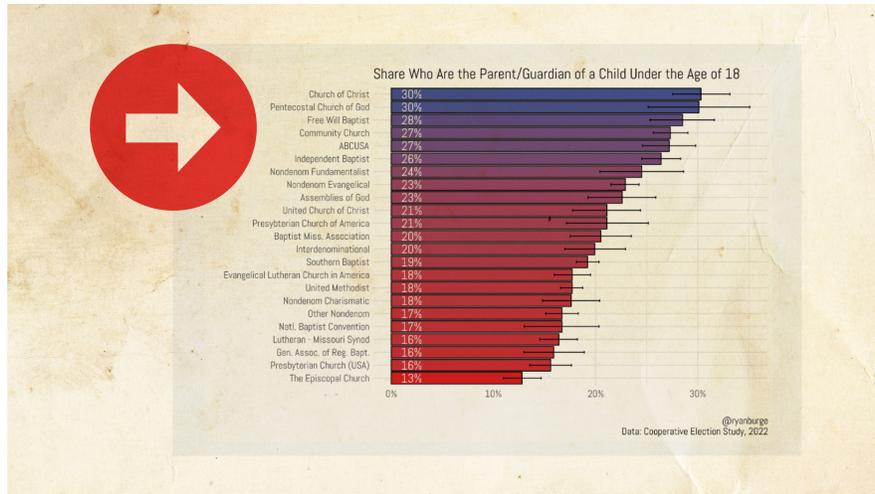


Curriculum is a key infrastructure component, providing churches with biblical teaching from a Free Will Baptist perspective. In addition to curriculum, D6 Family Ministry conducts the Vertical Three Conference and Truth and Peace. These ministries are very effective.



Our research on these ministries, along with ETEAM and CMP from IM, indicate youth who have participated in these programs are actively engaged in their faith today and the vast majority are serving in some way in Free Will Baptist churches.

In many ways, our young people are an untapped strength. These ministries work.



As you may know, the results from the **Cooperative Election Survey in 2022** indicated **28%** of Free Will Baptists are a parent or guardian of a child under age 18. This is the third highest of any denomination!

This data indicates we should be putting greater emphasis on our camps.



If you review the May releases from the **Better Together Podcast**, you will hear from three camp directors. These camps ran from **92 to 243 students** each last year. These three camps alone saw **42 decisions, and seven young men answer** the call to the ministry. Camps are a crucial pipeline to our colleges and churches, helping raise up pastors and other workers.

Other infrastructure needs are our colleges. One 3 for 30 objective is to enroll a thousand students in our colleges. Last year's enrollment of **763 students** is on the screen..



Free Will Baptist College Enrollment

States	Welch	Randall	Southeastern	Total
Tennessee	244	5	0	249
Oklahoma	10	177	0	187
North Carolina	16	0	51	67
International	27	18	1	46
California	4	35	0	39
Texas	1	29	0	30
Alabama	19	1	3	23
Florida	19	0	0	19
Illinois	10	0	1	11
South Carolina	2	0	8	10
Virginia	7	1	1	9
Kentucky	7	0	0	7
Mississippi	7	0	0	7
Missouri	6	1	0	7
Rhode Island	2	5	0	7
Arkansas	1	4	0	5
Indiana	5	0	0	5
Georgia	2	2	0	4
Kansas	0	4	0	4
Michigan	2	2	0	4
Ohio	4	0	0	4
Arizona	1	1	1	3
Louisiana	1	1	0	2
New York	1	1	0	2
Puerto Rico	0	2	0	2
USVI	2	0	0	2
Colorado	1	0	0	1
Idaho	0	1	0	1
Iowa	0	1	0	1
Minnesota	0	1	0	1
Montana	1	0	0	1
South Dakota	1	0	0	1
Washington	0	1	0	1
West Virginia	1	0	0	1
	404	293	66	763

Students who go to Free Will Baptist colleges are significantly more likely to continue to minister and serve in Free Will Baptist churches. We need more students in this pipeline.

**WHAT AM I ASKING
YOU TO DO?**

For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and **counteth the cost**, whether he have sufficient to finish it?"

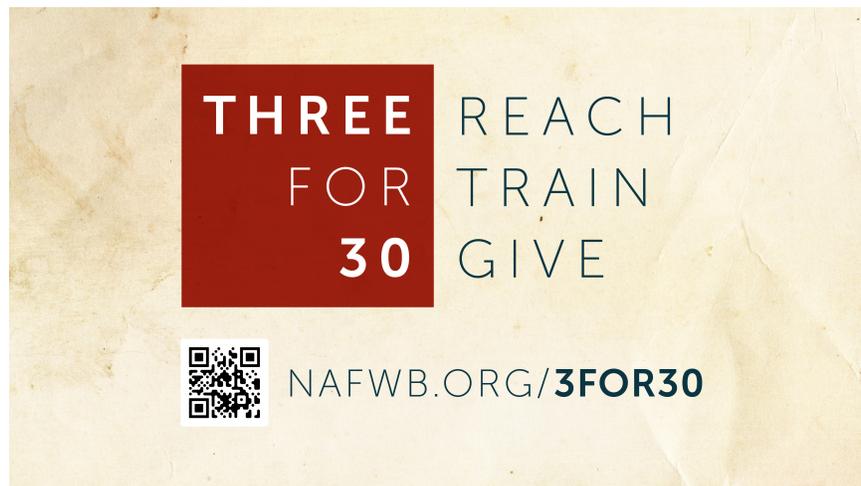
Luke 14:28

So, What am I asking you to do? Jesus said, For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?

I am asking you to Focus on Strategy.



To defeat the Axis powers, the Allies had to work together and follow a strategy. They were intentional and coordinated their efforts while maintaining their autonomy. The denomination also will need to follow a strategy in this major effort to turn **our trends** around. In 2020, denominational leadership developed the 3 for 30 plan,



which consisted of three goals to emphasize until 2030: *reach people with the gospel, train them in the faith, and give of ourselves to the Lord.* **What would happen if churches and associations worked toward these goals?**

I am asking you to Utilize and Promote resources like **Know Your Community.**



Sixty-nine percent of Free Will Baptist churches that have used Know Your Community can identify an action they have taken to engage their community. If you have used this resource, consider working with other similar churches, discussing ways to collaborate. Also, any church that has participated in Know Your Community can receive a free “new mover list” for newcomers within a five-mile radius of the church. **What might happen if we identify the needs of our community and engage our new neighbors?**

I am asking you to Use the **BLESS** app



to pray for your community. The app is a free resource for NAFWB churches and congregations. Encourage other churches in your state to use it as well and set goals for praying and sharing. **What might happen if we get serious about praying for our neighbors?**

I am asking you to do the Hope Initiative.



We have seen great progress in churches that have used **The Hope Initiative**. One church leader said, “We’ve done more outreach in 30 days than the last 30 years.” **What might happen if our churches actively engage lost friends, family members, neighbors, and coworkers?**

I am asking you to use the **First Aid Ready** resources



to help hurting people in your community and the **Reaching International Students Task Force** if you have a college nearby.



What might happen if our churches are equipped to help hurting people and serve international students?

I am asking you to Encourage churches to use **Rekindle Coaching**



if they are struggling. When you hear of a church without a pastor, encourage that congregation to use **The Shepherding Initiative**



to keep moving forward during their pastor search. **What might happen if our churches were healthier? What might happen if churches continued to make progress while searching for a pastor?**

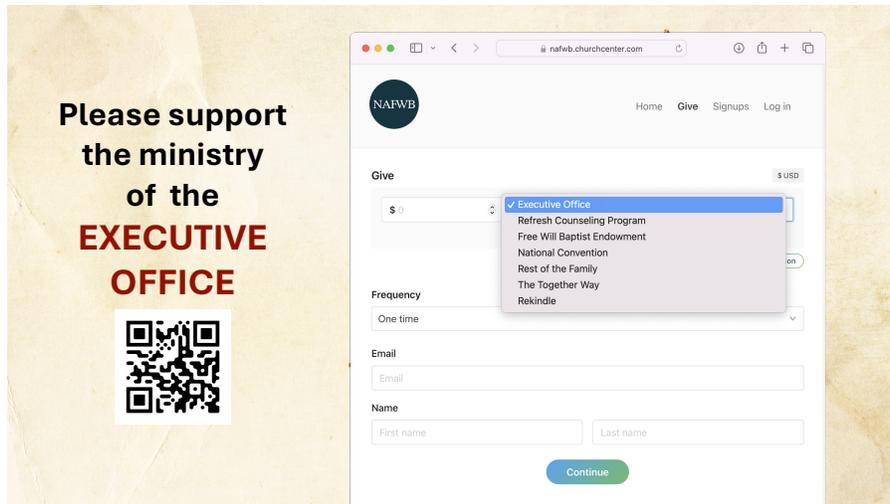
These resources work! Rather than being idle, let's get busy doing biblical activities with a proven track record. Let's encourage others to utilize these resources, knowing our words can either be a blessing or a curse. May we be people whose words are "fitly spoken," both in person and on social media. **What might happen if we utilized strategy? 1,925 churches strategically working together will accomplish more than we could ever imagine or think.**

I am asking you to Give.

3 WAYS TO GIVE...

Thank you for giving \$487,603.54 to the Executive Office in 2024! NAFWB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Designate to the Executive Office + Give to The Together Way + Give to the Rest of the Family Offering
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Please give to the Executive Office. I encourage you to give through the Cooperative/Together Way program as a way of giving to all national agencies. Cooperative giving would solve many of the financial problems we face. **Please put the Executive Office in your budget**



so we can continue to do what we do.

As you give, I encourage you to give to D6, Welch College, our other colleges, the WNAC, and Free Will Baptist camps as well to support infrastructure.

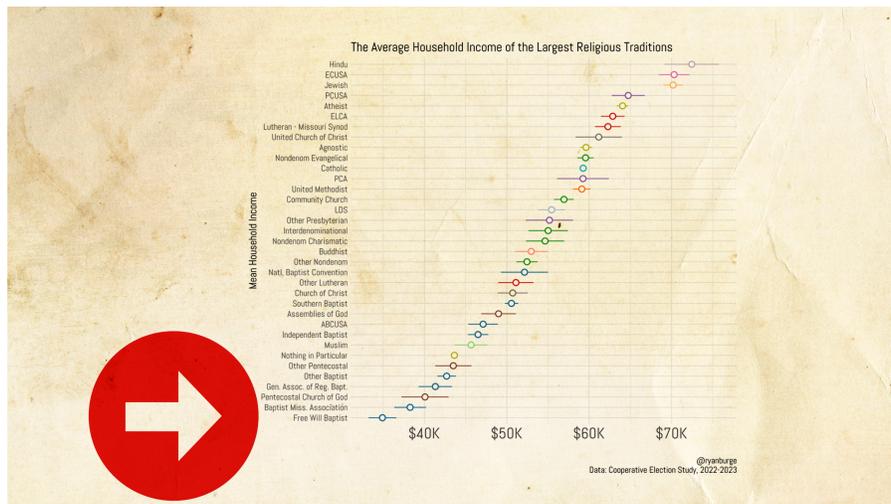
I am asking you to Focus on the Value of Free Will Baptists.



During World War II, the Allies knew they were fighting for a free world. This was a very important cause. Free Will Baptists have an even greater cause. We are trying to reach people with the gospel. Without it, they will spend eternity in Hell. We seek to train them in the gospel, which changes their life trajectory, impacting the kinds of families they will have and the way they live.

Some might wonder if Free Will Baptists, who are less than 1% of the U.S. population, are even needed for this task. **Wouldn't it be better to just focus on Kingdom work?**

On the screen is a chart Ryan Burge



created from the results of the Congressional Election Survey. Notice the religious group with the *highest* income is Hindus, and the group with the *lowest* is Free Will Baptists. Some have debated whether these results truly describe Free Will Baptists. I believe they are missing the point. The point is: **50,000 Americans were surveyed, using a drop-down menu to choose from many different religious affiliations. The ones with the lowest incomes said, “I am Free Will Baptist.”**

That tells you a great deal about our denomination. **Free Will Baptists are engaged in Kingdom work with those who struggle the most from an income and educational standpoint.** Many of our churches are in rural areas and will never be highlighted for their size. In the church world, most would not consider these small, rural churches to be very important. **But they are important** to the economically and educationally disadvantaged. **If Free Will Baptists are diminished, who will take the gospel to them?**

In December 1941,



the **trends** were not good for the free world, but the Allies came together and reversed those **trends**. The world benefit to this day from their strategy and sacrifice. Let's reverse our own **trends** and build churches for present and future generations. This is critical, not only for North

America but also for lost people around the world. It is important to provide the infrastructure to continue reaching a world that has never heard. By working together, we can reverse the trends.



We are better together!

Brother Moderator, that is my report. Our auditor, Terry Hill is here to answer any questions about our financial report.