

## **CHUCK LOTZ, 10<sup>TH</sup> PASTOR, 1987-1990**



Chuck Lotz was the tenth pastor of Copper Mines Free Will Baptist Church. The following is Chuck and Shirley's own words regarding their association with Copper Mines and their personal history.

I was brought into this world on May 18, 1958, in the town of St Joseph, Missouri. My father was a salesman for the Armour Meat Company. He was transferred to mid- southeast Missouri. I was four years old when my parents pulled into a small town called Bonne Terre. At that time, I had an older sister, Kathy, and a younger brother, Jeff. For the next few years, there would be some additions to the Lotz clan. Next in line was Jim, then Mitch, and the final addition was Lisa. We all remain in the Bonne Terre area with the exception of Lisa. Lisa was killed in an automobile accident in 1999, at the age of 32. She left behind two young sons, Derek and Ben, and her husband Danny. They too, remain in the Bonne Terre Area.

We were a family involved with sports, school activities and other organizations that did not include church. We were taught right from wrong, and to believe in the Christian God, but without any real Bible knowledge.

I graduated from North County High School in 1976. (I am a bi-centennial graduate!) I married a girl from Farmington named Judy Rector. We had two children together, Amy then Brad. On Sunday, August 24, 1980, Judy was driving south on Highway 67 on her way to her parents' home. A person operating a motorcycle crossed the centerline and hit Judy's vehicle head on. Amy and Brad were also in the vehicle. Judy was fatally injured. The children came through the accident without any major injuries. At the time of the accident, I was out of town working in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, employed with the Westinghouse Company. I called home that afternoon. Instead of being able to talk with Judy and say hi to her and the kids, I was greeted with the tragic news of her death. The only thing that got me back home on that day was the survival of my kids.

On Tuesday night, August 26, 1980, the night before Judy's funeral, I was sitting in my living room holding one of my kids in my lap. I had friends and family surrounding me. In short, without the details ... I had a miraculous experience resulting in my acceptance of Christ that night.

I started attending Aulsbury Chapel Free Will Baptist Church, and I took Amy and Brad with me. A few months later, I answered the call to preach God's Word. A few months after that, I met a lady named Shirley.

Shirley was brought into this world on February 2, 1948, in the Bonne Terre Hospital. She grew up in the French Village area. She attended Aulsbury Chapel off and on as a child with her grandmother. When she was a young teenager, she accepted Christ at her home, and made it public during a revival meeting that Aulsbury was holding. She then began attending church faithfully. At the age of 19, she married a Bonne Terre boy named, Terry Pettus, who was in the Coast Guard. She and her husband moved away from the area for several years. She had two children, Terry and Joe. While living out of state, Shirley's husband was employed by an electrical corporation. One afternoon, Shirley received a visit from the local police department. The officer informed her that she needed to go to the hospital. Something had happened to her husband. The officer drove Shirley and her children to the hospital. She had heard the sirens just moments before the officer's visit. When she arrived at the hospital, she learned her husband had been shot and killed by a disturbed co-worker. She eventually moved back to Missouri and attended her home church, Aulsbury Chapel.

On June 12, 1982, Shirley and I were married. Terry was fourteen years old, Joe was two years old, Amy was three years old, and Brad was two years old. On April 18, 1983, Shirley and I had a baby boy. We named him Nathan.

With a completed family, I continued pursuing the ministry. My first pastoral experience was a church called Jones Creek Free Will Baptist Church. It was in a small community called Dittmer Missouri, close to House Springs. I was there over a year from 1982-1983. Realizing I needed more training when it comes to this pastoral thing...I resigned from Jones Creek and started attending Farmington Free Will Baptist Church. We got heavily involved with the ministry there, working the bus ministry, children's church, and visitation. I was privileged to be asked by Pastor Jim McAllister to preach on occasion. I always eagerly accepted the invitation, and I had that privilege extended to me numerous times. On December 1, 1986, I was hired by Farmington Church as Bus Director and Visitation Coordinator.

In 1987, Bro. Jim McAllister resigned as pastor and went to Fresno, California. Eventually his staff also took other ministry opportunities elsewhere. It was 1987 when I was privileged to become pastor of Copper Mines. I received a phone call from Mr. George Matthews. At that time, George Matthews was a deacon at First Free Will Baptist Church of Flat River (now Park Hills), informing me that Copper Mines was searching for a pastor. Not long after Mr. Matthews had talked with me, I received a call from Copper Mines. A time was set for a tryout date, and you know the rest of the story. I pastored Copper Mines until 1990.



Other ministry opportunities I have had include Buckhorn General Baptist Church (Pastor, 1991-1993), Desoto Free Will Baptist Church (Assistant Pastor, 1994-1999) and National Home Missionary to Denver, Colorado, 1999-2001. While in Colorado, serious health issues dictated my resignation, and application for disability. We had to move back to Missouri to prepare as much as possible for my death. Something else took place instead. My health began to improve, improving to the point of shedding the status of being disabled. I

believe the prayers of the saints brought about my health improvement!

### A SHORT, TRUE STORY

I will never forget walking into Country Mart where Butch Pirtle was working. Until then, I had not seen Butch for quite some time. He had heard the news about my failing health taking me to the brink of death. If you could have seen Butch...as I saw Butch, you would have thought the same thing I thought...Butch saw a ghost! All he could do was stare at me, but he finally began to talk. He said, "I...I...I...I thought you were...were...." I bailed him out and replied, "I know but I'm not!" That was a laughing good moment for me and, I think, for Butch as well. I was feeling so good; I took on the pastoral position at the First Free Will Baptist Church of Park Hills, in September of 2002, where I am currently pastoring.

There were times I worked secular jobs. Two of those jobs included working as a police officer. The city of Fredericktown tested me, accepted me, and sent me for training. I enjoyed working with the officers at that time and have good memories from those days. I never worked fulltime for Fredericktown, but I went on to serve other municipalities' fulltime. I served as police chief for a while in 1991-1992 for the small town of Leadwood, Missouri.

I also was trained to drive the big rigs over the road. I drove for Highway Carriers, GM, PD George, and De Soto Fuel. I drove part time for De Soto Fuel and PD George during my ministry at De Soto to supplement my income.

While working in the secular arena, I always took advantage of every opportunity to preach God's Word when I was invited to do so.

Trying to stay true to what I believed to be God's calling on my life, plus trying to make a living for my family, was never an easy task. I was twenty-four years old and Shirley was thirty-four when we put our families together. We had many trials, failures, and tears. You only get one shot in raising a child. I am sure we did many things wrong, mainly because we didn't know any better. I'm sure we were 1000 miles away from perfect, but we must have done some things right! One right thing (and it is a big one) would be our determination to please God at the end of the day. This would include

staying in the forgiving arms of God and opening up our arms of forgiveness to each other and to others. By God's grace, we did it!

All of our kids love and respect each other. One of Shirley's and my greatest joys is to have all of our kids together, along with our grandchildren.

### THE CALL

The time I spent as pastor of the Copper Mines Church will always be a precious time of memories. When I was in the valley of decision to accept the call as pastor, I was in route driving south on Highway 67 going to the church to preach for the second time. I put out a little prayer, "Lord if you want me to accept this church to pastor, let me see a deer along the way." As I turned onto Copper Mines Road, not one but two deer crossed our path from left to right. I knew then that God had called! (Give me a break! I was only 29 years old and had only been a Christian for seven years! I was sure this was a Biblical concept of determining God's will).

### THE AREA

I immediately fell for the landscape of the area. The simple things for example: driving along the road, exploring the surrounding woods, hills and river, hunting those same woods and hills, walking or riding that 125 Yamaha on the old railroad bed (with Nathan hanging on), fishing Jack's small but productive pond, and picking blackberries with Elza, (although my picking ability could be rated almost worthless). But better yet, I was the recipient of the fruit from Elza's labor!

### THE PEOPLE

It was not just the landscape. During my stay, I also fell for the community of people who made up the fellowship known as Copper Mines Church. I wish I had the time to write about everyone who blessed all of our lives. I would express my love and gratitude towards each one. I believe I'm a better person for God because of the people I was privileged to know during my time.

### THE STAY

If you count the time including the time set by the by-laws to find the next pastor, my tenure was a little over four years. I count those four years as positive years in my life and my family's life. These four years of our life included raising four youngsters: Amy, Brad, Joe and Nathan, plus keeping track of one teenager, Terry (who decided not to move to Fredericktown with us but stayed with his aunt and uncle back in the Leadbelt). We all have a lot of great memories that come from those four years. On occasion (especially holidays) when all of our kids can be home, Copper Mines is in the line-up of our reminiscing.

## THE HIGHLIGHTS

I will never forget one of the greatest highlights of ministry...Our big day...Friend Day. We blew everyone out of the water when we had 232 in worship service. I believe we broke the record on that day! A lot of our folks (mostly the men) stood outside the door on the front porch and in the yard to make room for our visitors. If I knew then what I know now...I would have presented the invitation completely different. Giving an altar call wasn't a good plan...there wasn't enough room to get to the altar! Friend Day was one of the greatest highlights but not the greatest. The greatest highlights would be every time a person would come to know Christ! You can't beat that event!

## MUSIC

Before coming to Copper Mines, I never heard music or sang songs quite like the style of your church. It was pleasantly different. I soon learned that most of Fredericktown was of the same persuasion of music style. It didn't take long for me to comply. I remember it as being country, peppy and fun, but also heart grabbing when the Spirit so moved. I can close my eyes right now and hear the congregation, "Life is like a railroad station..."

## MISSION SUPPORT

Shirley and I will not forget the support Copper Mines gave to us when we accepted the position as national home missionaries to Northglenn, Colorado. We thank you again for your generosity towards the building of God's kingdom in other parts of the country. The work is still going and Copper Mines has a part in keeping the doors open.

## TWO LESSONS

### One... Carrying your cross for Christ

I won't forget the personal story Vernon Sikes shared with me one day. It had to do with carrying the cross. It goes way back to the time when the youth camp was being developed. I think it was the shower house and evangelist cabin that was being constructed. I might not be correct on which building that was under construction, but that's not important to the meat of the story. Vernon, do you remember the story? I have used it many times during my ministry. Ask Vernon to tell it to you if you haven't heard it yet. Or if you have heard it, it wouldn't hurt you to hear it again.

### Two...The joy of giving

One of the joys of Elza Rehkop (Clarice also) was to bless others with their bounty from their garden and the blackberry patch. Elza do you remember when you graciously allowed a person to come on your property to pick blackberries for free? You received a phone call from that same person not long after they left your property. She made you a great offer! I have used this story many times in my ministry as well. Ask him to tell it to you.

## THE VICTORIES

I can think of several victories God gave to us during our ministry at Copper Mines. Once again, time would not let me share all of the victories that I could share. Some of the victories are just too personal for me to share. Other victories are not under my prerogative to share. I thank God for each and every victory we experienced. I thank God for all the people who make up the fellowship called Copper Mines Free Will Baptist Church.

## THE KIDS

### Terry

Terry is married to Beverly Parker who is from Bismarck. They have two children, Terry, (T. for short) who is 15 and Tyler who is 10. They live two miles up the road from us. Terry works as manager of Precision Equipment in Farmington. Beverly is a loan supervisor with Postal Credit Union in St Louis.

### Amy

Amy is married to Phill Lytle. They have two boys, Aidan and Ethan, who are 3 and 19 months, respectively. Both Amy and Phill are graduates from FWB Bible College and reside in Nashville, Tennessee. Amy is a certified school teacher and Phill is employed by the state of Tennessee screening disability cases. Here is note from Amy about her time at Copper Mines.

## A WORD FROM AMY

Dear friends:

How little did I know that my time at Copper Mines would not really end when our family moved. Now that I am married to a son of a Hovis, I am an in-law to many of you! My memories of my time there are aplenty, including the great food and also the bike rides on the county road we called "Turtle Lane" (Nathan always wanted to bring home every turtle we found.) I remember being in church plays, participating in the frog and turtle races, and the great climbing tree in our front yard. I also remember my Sunday School teacher, Butch Pirtle, allowing me to read the Scripture aloud every week because I LOVED to read out loud. And now as a teacher and a mother I get to read out loud all the time. So, it is with great appreciation that I remember you and it is with thanksgiving that I was introduced to my future family while being a part of yours! With love, Amy

### Brad

Brad is single. He is a graduate from Missouri State University (Former SMS) in Springfield, Missouri. Brad is employed by Rogersville School District. He is the head baseball coach and teaches the computer lab. He has his degree in Physical Education.

### Joe

Joe is single. He has one child named Gianna. I call her GiGi. She is two years old. Joe will be getting married in September to Shawna. Shawna is from Wentzville. Joe resides in O'Fallon. He is the manger of sales for a Ford dealership in St. Louis. (Hazelwood)

### Nathan

Nathan is single. He is a graduate from OTC (Ozark Technical College) in Springfield, Missouri. Nathan will be getting married on August 12<sup>th</sup>. He will be marrying Sarah Propst from Bonne Terre. Nathan is currently employed by a construction company doing rehabs in downtown Springfield, but will soon be taking a job with another company to become the head framer for new homes. Sarah is a graduate from Missouri State University and is now employed by the State of Missouri IRS as an auditor.

### Closing

I wish everyone a happy homecoming! God bless! Happy 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, Copper Mines! Thank you for being part of our lives!

Written by: Chuck Lotz

## CHARLES HERBERT MCMILLIAN, 11<sup>TH</sup> PASTOR, 1990-1993



Charles Herbert (Herb) McMillian was the eleventh pastor of Copper Mines Free Will Baptist Church. He served the church from November 21, 1990, until June 1993, when he resigned for health reasons.

Herb was born January 17, 1931, in Leadington, St. Francois County, Missouri. His parents were Charles and Avis Ann (Reese) McMillian. His sisters were Ruby, Geneva, and June. The McMillian Family moved frequently, and Herb attended schools in Esther, Fredericktown, Miller's Chapel, Burns, Mouser, and Marquand. After school, Herb ran his own grocery store for a while.

On February 27, 1951, Herb entered the United States Army in St. Louis, Missouri. He was stationed at Camp Chaffee, Arkansas for basic training. In August 1951, he went to Japan, and then to Inchon, Korea. He was assigned to the Headquarters Company, 57<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery, 7<sup>th</sup> Division where he served for twelve months. He returned to the United States in October 1952, and served at Camp Crowder, Missouri for one month. He was released from active duty on November 26, 1952. He was in inactive reserves for five years, and was honorably discharged on July 17, 1956.

Doris Elaine Francis was born May 31, 1937, on Trace Creek, Saco, Madison County, Missouri. Her parents were Orville and Zella (Stacy) Francis. She had a brother Donald, and a sister, Delores. In her early years Doris attended school at Trace Creek. Later, the Francis family moved to Fredericktown, and Doris graduated from Fredericktown High school in May 1955. During her working career, Doris held jobs for the Democrat News, St. Louis Terminal Field and Warehouse Company, and the Central RT3 School District.

Herb and Doris met in April 1947 in Fredericktown. At that time, the McMillian and Francis families lived in the same neighborhood. They were married December 5, 1955, by Sylvester A. Hand at his home in the Village Creek Community, Madison County, Missouri. To this union, three sons were born: David, Darrell, and Roger. They have seven grandchildren.

After his discharge from the Army, Herb went back to work at his grocery store in Fredericktown. He was a butcher by trade. In 1957, the family moved to St. Francois County where Herb worked for the Southeast Mental Health Center in Farmington. He retired from there in June 1988 after thirty-one years of service.

Herb and Doris have been involved in the Lord's work for many years. Herb was saved in the summer of 1960. He was baptized in Loughboro Creek, Doe Run, St. Francois County, Missouri. On December 31, 1962, Herb and Doris joined Hurryville Free Will Baptist Church, Farmington, Missouri.

Doris was saved at Fredericktown First Free Will Baptist Church in 1949. She was baptized at Thompson Ford on the Little St. Francis River in Madison County, Missouri. She joined the Fredericktown Church that same year. While she attended other churches, her membership remained at Fredericktown until 1962.

While at Hurryville, Herb served as Sunday School teacher, Sunday School superintendent, trustee, and deacon. He was ordained at Hurryville on March 7, 1982, and also served as Associate Pastor. While at Hurryville, Doris served as Sunday School teacher, church clerk, and treasurer.

In September 1983, Herb was called to pastor the Potosi Free Will Baptist Church and served there until May 1984. In June 1984, he accepted the pastorate of the Oak Hill Free Will Baptist Church in Madison County, Missouri. He served there until June 1990. Very shortly thereafter, Herb and Doris came to Copper Mines.

In their own words, Herb and Doris describe their ministry at Copper Mines as follows:

“The Lord blessed the three years with good services, Bible Schools, revivals and the fellowship of members. On June 22, 1992, I had the privilege of baptizing seven young people. Two were my granddaughters, Lauren and Lois McMillian, along with Ashley Yount, Matthew Hamblin, Jerry Huffman, Julie Davis, and Joe Stell. Special memories are of Greg and Melina Buxton joining our church and watching our young people grow in the Lord.”

Herb and Doris currently reside in Park Hills, Missouri. They are members of Gospel Light Church in Bonne Terre, Missouri. Herb serves as Associate Pastor and Doris serves as church clerk and treasurer. In his spare time, Herb enjoys hunting and fishing. Doris is a member of the Captain Henry Whitener Chapter of the Daughter's of the American Revolution. She has volunteered at MaMa's Thrift Shop, and also enjoys working on family genealogy.

Copper Mines Church was richly blessed by Herb and Doris during the time they spent here. Since they do not live very far away, we are still blessed with their visits from time to time.

Written by: Lon Edward Rehkop and Doris McMillian.

## LES BEQUETTE, 12<sup>TH</sup> PASTOR, 1993-1995



Bro. Les was the twelfth pastor for Copper Mines Church, serving as interim pastor from November 1993 to May 1995.

Les Bequette was born January 7, 1956, to Lue and Almedia (Underwood) Bequette at Fredericktown, Missouri. His brothers and sisters are Wes, Bonita Thompson, Paul and Bev Davis.

Beverly (Matthews) Bequette was born on May 27, 1957, to Paul and Lillie (Mills) Matthews at Cape Girardeau, Missouri. Her brothers and sisters are Kay, Paul Ray and Sue.

Les and Bev were married on November 11, 1983, at Union Light Church and are the parents of two daughters. Sarah Elisabeth was born January 7, 1985, and is now a student at the Free Will Baptist Bible College, Nashville, Tennessee. Rachel Dawn was born November 28, 1988, and is a student at Meadow Heights School.

Les was ordained on January 8, 1994, at Union Light Free Will Baptist Church. He was associated with Copper Mines Church as a young man, and later with his family served the church as pastor. This was a time for the family to grow spiritually and develop lasting friendships.



Copper Mines was the first church that he had pastored. Since then he has pastored at Union Light Free Will Baptist Church and Liberty Free Will Baptist Church in Sikeston, Missouri. The family continues to work for the Lord at Sedgewickville Baptist Church in Bollinger County.

Written by: Thelma Sikes

## MARK TURRELL, 13<sup>TH</sup> PASTOR, 1995-2001



Mark Alan Turrell was the thirteenth pastor of Copper Mines Free Will Baptist Church. He served the church from May 28, 1995, to October 9, 2001.

Mark was born April 5, 1960, in Tulsa, Oklahoma. He was the son of Ray and Charlene Johnson Turrell. His sisters were Vicky, Cindy, and Denette. He grew up in Claremore, Oklahoma, and graduated from Sequoyah High School in Claremore in 1978. His family attended Methodist and Baptist churches sporadically during his early childhood.

Ramona (Mona) Ann Flynn was born November 16, 1962, in Fort Smith, Arkansas. She was the daughter of Rev. Charles and Velma King Flynn.

Rev. Flynn was a Free Will Baptist Minister. Mona's brothers and sisters were Terry Glen, Brenda Willett, and Rhonda Willett. Mona grew up in the area around Fort Smith, Arkansas, and Owasso, Oklahoma. She graduated from Owasso High School in 1980. She was saved at a very early age while at a youth camp in southeast Oklahoma.

Mark and Mona first met on September 2, 1979. Six months later, they were married on March 15, 1980, at Liberty Free Will Baptist Church, in Oologah, Oklahoma. Mark was saved at the same church two months after they married. In August of 1980, Mark surrendered to the Lord's call on his life to preach the gospel. Mark and Mona had their first two children during this time; Rachel Amanda was born on January 18, 1981, and Benjamin James was born on August 30, 1983.

Mark was ordained by the Northeast Association of the State of Oklahoma Free Will Baptists on November 18, 1984. In December 1984, the Turrell Family relocated to St. Louis, Missouri, and began attending the Grace Free Will Baptist Church in Arnold, Missouri, under the pastorate of Rev. Glenn Rehkop. Under Rev. Rehkop, Mark was introduced to the congregation of Copper Mines Church.

Mark began pastoring his first church in October 1986 at the Faith Free Will Baptist Church in St. Louis, Missouri. In May 1987, Mark was called back to Chelsea, Oklahoma, where he took part in the planting of the Grace Chapel Free Will Baptist Church. At that time, the Lord blessed Mark and Mona with two more children; Nathan Elijah was born July 20, 1988, and Micah Seth was born June 20, 1991. The Turrells remained at Grace Chapel FWB Church until May 1993, after which they attended the Freedom Baptist Church in Tulsa, Oklahoma, where Mark served as Church Elder from 1993 to 1994. In 1994, the Turrell family began attending Maranatha Baptist Temple in Collinsville, Oklahoma, where Mark served as the Associate Pastor until May 1995. It

was at that time that Mark was called to pastor the Copper Mines Free Will Baptist Church in Fredericktown, Missouri. He served for almost 6-1/2 years until October 2001, when the Turrells relocated to Owasso, Oklahoma, where they currently reside and attend Tulsa Bible Church. In recent years, the family has grown to include Michael Pirtle, son of Stanley and Nancy Pirtle. Michael married Rachel Turrell in September 1999. They have one son, Isaac Michael Pirtle, born in February 2005. They also have one child on the way. Michael and Rachel reside in Westville, Oklahoma. Benjamin Turrell married Cassandra Myres in October 2003.

Copper Mines Church was blessed during the Turrell's ministry. Souls were added to the church and lives were changed because of their service. God bless the Turrells as they continue to serve Him.

Written by: Lon Edward Rehkop and Rachel Amanda Turrell Pirtle

## **DARIN KEITH ALVIS, 14<sup>TH</sup> PASTOR, 2003 – PRESENT**



Darin Alvis is the fourteenth pastor of Copper Mines Free Will Baptist Church. Darin Keith Alvis was born May 22, 1972, son of Darrel and Linda Alvis, of Chandler, Indiana. Darin was raised in a Christian home with an older sister, Missy, and a younger sister, Tamela. He accepted Christ into his life and was baptized at the age of seven. At the age of 16, Darin answered God's call on his life to preach. Under the pastoral leadership of Robert Helms, Darin grew up attending Faith Free Will Baptist Church in Chandler, Indiana. During Darin's senior year of high school, 1990, God brought the Alvis family through a difficult time. His sister, Missy, was killed from a head-on collision. Later

that year Darin went to attend Southeastern Free Will Baptist College where he studied and prepared himself for God's calling on his life.

Joy Evette Alvis was born March 27, 1970, daughter of Walt (Virgil) and Carolyn Adney, of Festus, Missouri. In 1976, Joy's mom began attending Bethel Free Will Baptist Church, in Festus, Missouri, with Joy and her sisters. Joy accepted Christ into her life and was baptized at the age of seven. After many rough years of marriage, Joy's parents divorced. In 1983, Joy's mom married Warren Bergmann, a wonderful Christian man who loved the Lord with all his heart. He was a great Christian example in Joy and her sisters' lives. In 1988, Joy attended Southeastern Free Will Baptist College where she and Darin met. Joy graduated in May 1994 with a major in Church Music and minor in Missions.

After dating 2 ½ years, Darin and Joy married on July 23, 1994, at Bethel Free Will Baptist Church, Festus, Missouri. They lived in North Carolina until Darin graduated from Southeastern Free Will Baptist College in May, 1995 with a major in Bible and a minor in Pastoral Theology and Missions. In June, 1995, Darin accepted a part-time position as Youth Pastor in Florence, South Carolina.

November, 1995, Joy's step-father, Warren, passed away one month after being diagnosed with cancer. Joy's mom has survived cancer three times (1996, 2000, and 2004). Through the struggles of family deaths and sickness, Darin and Joy have learned so much about themselves and how to better depend on God.

In August 1996, Darin accepted a position as Associate Pastor at Joy's home church, Bethel Free Will Baptist Church, Festus, Missouri.

Dalton Warren was born January 21, 1997, at Jefferson Memorial Hospital, Festus, Missouri.

Dylan James was born January 31, 1998, at Jefferson Memorial Hospital, Festus, Missouri.

On January 1, 1999, this young Alvis family moved to Cabool, Missouri, where Darin accepted his first pastorate position. We learned many things and appreciate all that God has changed in us and taught us while in service at Mt. Pisgah Free Will Baptist Church.

July 25, 2001, Melissa Joy was born at Texas County Memorial Hospital, Houston, Missouri.

On February 1, 2003, the Alvis family moved to Fredericktown, Missouri, after Darin accepted the position of Pastor at Copper Mines Free Will Baptist Church. We are enjoying our work here and all that God is teaching us. We have been here 3 ½ years and pray for many more years to serve the Lord at Copper Mines Church with our new church family and good friends. We are truly blessed to be here at this time in our lives!

Written by: Darin and Joy Alvis

**A TRIBUTE POEM TO COPPER MINES**  
**FREE WILL BAPTIST CHURCH AND ITS PASTORS**

There is no one here who can remember nineteen-o-six, the 22<sup>nd</sup> of September the Copper Mines Church will celebrate its century mark, from this date our pastors come and our pastors go. We will name them off, row by row.

Rev. Fred Brotherton was the very first one.  
Number two was Rev. J. L. Yancey,  
A long time before you and me.  
Rev. S.A. Hand was the next to lend a hand,  
He was a great leader of the band.  
The very next one was Brother Woodrow,  
The first Bible School was his row to hoe.  
To reap his harvest came Brother Glenn,  
Friends and family all loved him.  
Next in line was Brother Darnell,  
He knew Revelations so very well.  
Brother O.D. with his family of seven,  
Pointed the way to enter Heaven.  
From out of the North came Brother Wes Rider,  
Our spirits were high, our future brighter.  
Michael, the Archangel, Raymond his name,  
We all loved his sermons, this was his fame.  
Brother Chuck Lotz was the next in line,  
He keeps us all busy and we're doing fine.  
Brother Herb McMillian, a God-fearing man,  
He brings out our best, we know that we can.  
Brother Les Bequette, our interim shepherd,  
He was very well versed in the Holy Word.  
Oklahoma gave us Brother Mark Turrell, with family of six,  
We are doing quite well.  
Brother Darin Alvis now comes in view,  
Joy, Dalton and Dylan, and Melissa, too.  
The parsonage home is filled to the brim,  
and Joy sings and plays a lovely hymn.  
Our Pastor Darin is number fourteen,  
And many others filled in between  
They all have earned our respect and love,  
And showed us the way to Heaven above.  
One hundred years have now gone past,  
The Copper Mines Church will surely last.  
Until Jesus comes to claim his bride,  
Then we will be forever by his side.

Written by: Clarice Rehkop (Revised from the 2003 Homecoming Brochure)

## LIST OF DEACONS

Since the beginning of the church, there have been nineteen men to serve as deacons. Like the pastors, some served for a short time, while others served for many years. The duties and responsibilities of a deacon are very much like those of the pastor. On many occasions, the deacons have had to fill the office of the pastor. The church has been blessed by the men that have served as deacons. Following is a list of the deacons and the periods they have served the church.

### Deacons

- |     |                               |  |
|-----|-------------------------------|--|
| 1.  | Brother John Lee              | 1907 - Unknown   |
| 2.  | Brother Gus Scemino           | 1907 - Unknown   |
| 3.  | Brother William Boyer         | April 1909 – Unknown   |
| 4.  | Brother Luke Abernathy        | August 3, 1929 – June 20, 1942                               |
| 5.  | Brother Ray Thomas            | December 26, 1937 - 1962                                     |
| 6.  | Brother John Broadfoot        | December 26, 1937 – Unknown                                  |
| 7.  | Brother Harrison Hovis        | 1937 – January 14, 1970                                      |
| 8.  | Brother Leeman Underwood      | September 24, 1949 – 1960                                    |
| 9.  | Brother Lindell Hovis         | August 29, 1955 - August 18, 1963                            |
| 10. | Brother Milton Hovis          | September 10, 1955 - January 7, 1968                         |
| 11. | Brother Jerry Huffman         | January 28, 1961 - July 27, 1981                             |
| 12. | Brother Leamon Killian        | January 20, 1963 - July 4, 1965                              |
| 13. | Brother Elza Rehkop           | November 30, 1968 – May 28, 1992<br>March 26, 1997 - Present |
| 14. | Brother George Hovis          | November 4, 1970 - January 30, 1999                          |
| 15. | Brother Robert Huffman        | March 18, 1983 - July 15, 1997                               |
| 16. | Brother Brad Yount            | March 18, 1983 - June 12, 1997                               |
| 17. | Brother Vernon Sikes          | March 18, 1983 - Present                                     |
| 18. | Brother David Hovis, Jr.      | November 14, 1998 - Present                                  |
| 19. | Brother Stuart “Butch” Pirtle | February 26, 2006 - Present                                  |

**I Timothy 3:8-13** Likewise must the deacons be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless. Even so must their wives be grave not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

## **MEMBER'S PROFILES**

**Colossians 3:12-17** Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering: Forbearing one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

Copper Mines Free Will Baptist Church. Built of concrete, mortar, blocks, wood, nails, metal, glass, and fabric. Assembled by the hands of talented craftspeople with hearts of passion and love. Filled with pews, songbooks, pulpit, and an altar. This is the church.

Copper Mines Free Will Baptist Church. A place, long on history. A place that brings back memories of childhood, past acquaintances, and bygone years. A place to look forward to being at. A place to worship God. A sanctuary to pray and sing hymns to God. A house where the Spirit of God dwells. This is the church.

Copper Mines Free Will Baptist Church. More than a physical building. More than a place of worship. A body of people. A body of Believers. Believers in God. Believers that Christ was the Son of God. Believers that Christ died to save the sinners of the world. Believers that Christ rose from death on the third day. Believers that Christ is coming back some day. Believers that spread the Good News of the Gospel. This is the church.

For one hundred years, people have been attending Copper Mines Free Will Baptist Church. It is impossible to determine how many different people have passed through the church doors, but the number is probably in the thousands. During that period, over six hundred Believers have been called to make Copper Mines their church home. Some were members for only a short time. Some were members for many decades. There have been young and old, rich and poor. They came from all walks of life: farmers, nurses, miners, cooks, carpenters, factory workers, teachers, prison guards, truckers, mechanics, postal workers, electricians, machinists, beauticians, programmers, engineers, secretaries, seamstresses, housewives, counselors, dental assistants, store managers, elected officials, loggers, store clerks, grocery workers.... Here are some of their stories.

Research was completed on some deceased members. People in the community with ties to Copper Mines Church were asked to submit stories on their family members. Current members were asked to submit their stories. More Member's Profiles could have probably been completed, but no one was left out intentionally. The Membership List contains a complete listing of all members as recorded in church records. The Member's Profiles Section and the Membership List are dedicated to all the members of Copper Mine Free Will Baptist Church, past and present, and to the honor and glory of God.

## **LUKE G. AND MARTHA E. (BURCHAM) ABERNATHY**

Luke Gilbert Abernathy was born January 30, 1885, in Missouri. He was the son of John and Mary Hope Abernathy. He was a farmer by trade.

Martha Elizabeth (Burcham) Abernathy was born February 6, 1871, in Bollinger County, Missouri. She was the daughter of Joseph and Talitha (Pulliam) Burcham.

Luke and Martha Abernathy attended Mine La Motte Free Will Baptist Church before coming to Copper Mines. It was there that Luke was ordained for the position of deacon.

Luke and Martha eventually moved to the Copper Mines Community. They lived in a house in the area where the John "Storm" and Debbie Rehkop residence is now located. On June 1, 1929, Luke and Martha joined Copper Mines Free Will Baptist Church. On July 6, 1929, Martha became the Church Clerk at Copper Mines. On August 3, 1929, Luke became a deacon at Copper Mines.

Martha served as clerk until her sudden death on November 24, 1930. She was buried in the Mine La Motte Cemetery, Madison County, Missouri. Luke continued serving as a member and deacon at Copper Mines after Martha died. He served until his death on July 20, 1942. He was also buried at Mine La Motte Cemetery.

Written by: Lon Edward Rehkop

**GREG, MELINA, ALYSSA, ARIAH, ALAYNA, ARIKA, AND  
ALIVIA BUXTON**



Willis Lee Buxton married Gwendolyn Catherine Thaller on March 24, 1962, and was blessed with two children: Russell Lee Buxton born on January 14, 1963, and Gregory Brian Buxton born on May 22, 1966. Willis and Gwendolyn Buxton were divorced on August 17, 1971.

Willis Buxton married Linda Medford. They were blessed with Catherine Eileen Buxton on October 2, 1976. They were later divorced. Willis Buxton married Judy Ray Easley on October 14, 1995.

Gwendolyn Buxton married William John Grohs, Jr., on May 31, 1973. They were blessed with one daughter, Angela Joy Grohs on July 6, 1978.

Linnie Dale Gray and Evelyn Gertrude Kerr were wed on February 9, 1963. They were blessed with five children: Anthony Dale (January 31, 1964, Kalamazoo, Michigan – February 1, 1964, Kalamazoo, Michigan), Lisa Marcell (February 8, 1965, Kalamazoo, Michigan – June 15, 1966, Gideon, Missouri), Mona Jean (April 20, 1967, Kennett, Missouri), Melina Jeannine (October 15, 1968, Kennett, Missouri), and Marla Jeannette (August 22, 1973, Poplar Bluff, Missouri). Except for the time they spent in Michigan, Dale and Evelyn have always been members of Tatum Chapel General Baptist Church near Peach Orchard, Missouri.

Gregory Brian Buxton and Melina Jeannine Gray were wed on August 10, 1991, at Tatum Chapel General Baptist Church. They were blessed with five children. Those children are Alyssa Naschell (January 7, 1992, Fredericktown, Missouri), Aria Nakhayle (September 7, 1994, Fredericktown, Missouri), Alayna Nakohl (June 19, 2001, Farmington, Missouri), Arika Noelle (September 14, 2002, St. Louis, Missouri during a Copper Mines Church trip to Six Flags), and Alivia Nalynn (June 20, 2004, Farmington, Missouri).

Melina Buxton was saved on January 27, 1980 at the age of eleven at Tatum Chapel General Baptist Church near Peach Orchard, Missouri. She joined Tatum Chapel Church on July 1, 1980. She was baptized on August 23, 1981, in the Flood Ways near Peach Orchard, Missouri.

Gregory and Melina met at Southeast Missouri State University in Cape Girardeau, Missouri. They were both Computer Applications in Physics and Engineering majors. They both graduated in May of 1991 and were married the following August.

Gregory Buxton was saved on August 4, 1991, at Tatum Chapel General Baptist Church near Peach Orchard, Missouri. He was baptized in 19 ditch near Holcomb, Missouri on September 15, 1991.

Greg's first job was at Computer Network Limited in Farmington, Missouri. Upon their marriage, they moved to Farmington. They immediately began looking for a church. They had been to one church on Sunday morning and another one on Sunday night. After the Sunday night service, they spotted the sign for Copper Mines Free Will Baptist Church on the side of Highway 67. They drove down the road, past the church. Several people, including many children were standing out front. They thought it looked like a nice church, but with so many people still there, they drove on past. When they came back by, only the pastor and his wife (Brother Herb and Sister Doris McMillan) were left standing around the burn barrel, behind the church, burning a dirty diaper. Greg and Melina stopped to inquire about the church. Brother Herb and Sister Doris invited them into their home, and Greg and Melina visited with them until 10:30 p.m.

The Buxtons began attending Copper Mines Church the following Wednesday, August 21, 1991. They knew it was where God wanted them. Greg and Melina joined Copper Mines Free Will Baptist Church on October 13, 1991. Since that time, their family has gone from two to seven. Greg and Melina are both active in the church. Greg has served as trustee, assistant Sunday School Superintendent, Sunday School Teacher, and youth leader. Melina has taught Sunday School, served as youth leader, and played the piano. Greg and Melina home school their five children.

Alyssa Buxton (presently 14) enjoys her friends at Copper Mines, especially the ones she has known since birth. She loves soccer and horseback riding and enjoys playing the piano. She attends The Willing Bible study group. Alyssa was saved at Camp Canaan in early August, 1998, baptized on October 18, 1998, at Castor River, and joined Copper Mines Church on February 10, 2002.

Ariah Buxton (presently 11) also enjoys her friends at Copper Mines. She loves softball, soccer, basketball, and horseback riding. She also enjoys playing the piano. Ariah was saved at her home in Fredericktown in the fall of 2000, baptized on July 1, 2001, at Castor River, and joined Copper Mines Church on February 10, 2002.

Alayna Buxton (presently 5) loves to go to church. She enjoys spending time with her best friend, Melissa Joy Alvis. Alayna enjoys riding horses, riding her bike, swimming, and playing outside.

Arika Buxton (presently 3) loves to go to church and see her friends, Jeff Young and Jason Provow. She is a sweet girl who loves to play dress up. She also loves animals and enjoys riding horses and going swimming.

Alivia Buxton (presently 2) enjoys the suckers that Brother Elza Rehkop and others keep in the coat closet at the back of the church. She likes everyone at church and is happy to

sit with just about anyone. She likes animals. She enjoys riding horses, swimming and playing outside.

The Greg Buxton family has been richly blessed, encouraged, and drawn closer to God down through the years because of the people who make up Copper Mines Free Will Baptist Church.

Written by: Melina Buxton

## EUGENE W. AND ESTHER O. (PARSON) FERGUSON



Eugene William (Bill) Ferguson was born May 31, 1928, in Womack, St. Francois County, Missouri. He is the son of James S. Ferguson and Pauline Kathryn Kiepe. His brothers and sisters were Theodore, Edna, Alberta, Carl, James and Marie.

Bill married Lola Hill on May 19, 1956, in St. Francois County, Missouri. To this union four daughters were born. They were Nelda Lee, Nancy Elaine, Sharon Kay, and Eileen Ruth. They attended Crossroads First Church of God. Lola

died in February 1962, and is buried in the Pirtle Cemetery, St. Francois County, Missouri.

Esther Ora Parson was born August 4, 1919, in Twelve Mile, Madison County, Missouri. She was the daughter of Lewis Levi Parson and Nancy Belle Kemp. Her brothers and sisters were Arley, Charles, Juanita, Betty, Ruth, Orville, Harley and Virgil.

Esther married David Francis on March 14, 1938, in Fredericktown, Madison County, Missouri. There were three children born to this union. They were Charles Levi, David William Jr., and Nancy Emmaline. They attended Copper Mines Free Will Baptist Church. David died April 28, 1959, and is buried in the Christian Church Cemetery in Fredericktown, Missouri.

On November 12, 1962, William Eugene Ferguson married Esther Ora (Parson) Francis in Womack, St. Francois County, Missouri. The marriage formed an extended family of Charles, David Jr., Nancy Emmaline, Nelda, Nancy Elaine, Sharon, and Eileen. This marriage was blessed with the addition of Kathryn Jean. They lived at Womack, St. Francois County, Missouri. At that time Charles and David Jr. had already moved away, and started families of their own. The Ferguson family continued to attend the Crossroads First Church of God until 1967. The family then started attending Copper Mines Free Will Baptist Church at which time Bill, Esther, Nancy Emmaline, Nelda, Nancy Elaine, and Sharon joined the church on November 10, 1968. Eileen and Kathy later joined on August 19, 1972.

Charles married Evelyn Underwood and they had three daughters: Charlet, Judith, and Rebecca. Charles and Evelyn live on Village Creek Road in Madison County, Missouri.

David Jr. resides in Bethalto, Illinois, and has one son, David III, who lives in Florida.

Nancy Emmaline married Rodger Matthews and they have two sons: Rodney and Timothy. Nancy and Rodger reside north of Fredericktown, Missouri.

Nelda married Gene Holliday, and she has two children: Matthew and Emily. Gene has two children: Jerry and Jordon. Nelda and Gene reside in Fredericktown, Missouri.

Nancy Elaine married Stanley Pirtle and they have two children: Michael and Melissa. Nancy and Stanley reside southeast of Fredericktown, Missouri.

Sharon married Joe Pogue, and she has one son, Jerry Huffman. Joe has three children: Katie, Luke, and Levi. Sharon and Joe live southeast of Fredericktown, Missouri.

Eileen married Les Provow and they have three children: Joshua, Jason, and Dorothy. They reside southwest of Fredericktown, Missouri.

Kathy resides in Fredericktown, Missouri and has two kids: Kara Beth and William Ross.

Bill and Esther were very dedicated parents and members of Copper Mines Church. Esther stayed pretty busy taking care of the kids, three gardens, canning food, taking care of chickens and pigs, and quilting. Bill was busy working at the mines, driving a school bus, cutting wood, and putting up hay (where he taught most of his girls to drive the hay truck – what an experience). He retired from the City of Farmington, Farmington, Missouri, in June 1990. Bill was our church bus driver for our church trips. He is also well known for being our church ball team's catcher for many years, and he always played barefooted.

A common weekend at the Ferguson house was neighborhood and church kids would be there playing kick the can, ball, or getting ready to go the cave. On Sunday mornings, Esther got up before church and started cooking a large lunch so that all the family would come after church for a family meal.

Esther died December 7, 1987, at Barnes Hospital in St. Louis, Missouri, and is buried in the Christian Church Cemetery in Fredericktown, Madison County, Missouri. She is greatly missed by the ones who knew her.

Bill resides at ClaRu DeVille Nursing Home in Fredericktown, Missouri. He thanks us every Sunday for taking him to church (which is still a very important part of his life,)

Written by: Kathy (Ferguson) Lunsford and Lon Edward Rehkop

## DAVID WILLIAM AND ESTHER ORA (PARSON) FRANCIS



Esther Ora Parson was born August 4, 1919, in Twelve Mile, Madison County, Missouri. She was the daughter of Lewis Levi Parson and Nancy Belle Kemp. Her brothers and sisters were Arley, Charles, Juanita, Betty, Ruth, Orville, Harley, and Vergil.

David William Francis was born September 3, 1917, in Catherine Place, Madison County, Missouri. He was the son of Charles M. Francis and Cora Wilfong Francis. His brothers were Lester and Alvie.

On March 14, 1938, Esther and David were married in Fredericktown, Madison County, Missouri. Three children were born to this union. They were Charles Levi, David William Jr., and Nancy Emmaline.

They lived at Catherine Place, Madison County, Missouri, their married life.

Esther and David joined Copper Mines Free Will Baptist Church on April 20, 1952.

David worked for a while at Brown Shoe Company, and in the timber industry, however, his greatest skill was as a carpenter.

David was stricken at a young age with the crippling disease of Multiple Sclerosis. While battling the disease, he was still able to use his carpenter skills in directing and assisting in the construction of the Copper Mines Church parsonage.

David's hobbies included hunting and fishing, and he also liked to discuss politics with Dude Underwood.

David was a member of Copper Mines until his death on April 28, 1959. He is buried in the Christian Church Cemetery in Fredericktown, Missouri

After David's death, Esther remained a member of Copper Mines until December 18, 1962, when she transferred her membership to Crossroads First Church of God after marrying Eugene William (Bill) Ferguson.

Written by: Kathy (Ferguson) Lunsford and Lon Edward Rehkop

## EARL AND MARIE (HOVIS) GRAHAM



Earl was born June 4, 1910, the son of Will and Elsie Heath Graham. Marie Albertia Hovis, daughter of Al and Esther (Graham) Hovis, was born April 15, 1914. They were married March 23, 1935, by the Rev. J. L. Yancey, a former pastor of Copper Mines. Their early married years were spent at Coldwater, Wayne County, Missouri, where Earl worked in the timber. They moved to Fredericktown in 1942. In 1948, they moved to the Copper Mines community and attended this church.

Marie was a Sunday School teacher and Vacation Bible School teacher and director. She was active in the ladies auxiliary for many years, and served as church clerk for 29 years. The ladies enjoyed a quilting bee for several years. As long as Marie's health allowed, she was a faithful quilter. Earl served as trustee, and his main job was to be sure the supplies were there when a project was going on.

Earl and Marie had four children: Thelma, Lindell, Mary, and Robert, Jr.

Thelma married Vernon Sikes. They had four children: Richard, Ivan, Rebecca, and Tom.

Lindell "Sonny" married Margie Howell, a Copper Mines girl, and they raised their family of four in the St. Charles area. They now live in Perry, Missouri, and winter in Texas. Their children are Mark, Kelly, Todd, and Allen. Mark, and wife Brenda, have three children: Jennifer, Angie, and Jake. Kelly and her husband, Fred Hasket, live at Chesterfield, Missouri. She has two children Jim Saab and Jessica Murphy. Jessica and her husband Tony had two children. Allen and his wife Angie are the parents of two children Amber and Andrew and live at St. Peters, Missouri. Todd and wife Julie have three daughters, Tara, Phylcia and Alyssa.

Mary married Jim Henson, also raised at Copper Mines. They lived in St. Louis area and Fulton, before retiring at La Motte Hills. They have a daughter and two sons: Amy, Eric, and Darren.

Robert "Bob" Earl Jr. married Belinda (Linda) Tesreau at the Copper Mines Church in 1966, and they had three children: Robert III, David, and Randy. Bob worked for the railroad in Omaha, Nebraska where they were raising their three sons. On December 25, 1990, Bob suddenly passed away at age 45. The family remains in Omaha where each are raising a family. Linda later remarried to Doug Halbert. Robert III and Amy have two sons; David and Mollie have two daughters; and Randy has a daughter.

Earl passed away in 1981 and Marie in 2000. They are both buried at Marcus Memorial Park, Fredericktown, Madison County, Missouri.