

For Immediate Release

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Bert Tippett Announces Retirement

NASHVILLE, TN—Reverend Bert Tippett, long-time employee and campus leader at Free Will Baptist Bible College, announced his retirement effective August 31, 2009, according to President Matt Pinson. Mr. Tippett and his wife Dianne joined the college staff in 1965, both serving in numerous roles. His trademark responsibilities in journalism and church relations, plus 10 years as campus pastor, marked his FWBBC career. He has worked part-time since 2002 while Dianne volunteered as mailing list coordinator.

During an interview in his book-lined office on August 14, Mr. Tippett said he had come to the conclusion that it was time for him to step back from recurring deadlines and college duties, and spend more time with his family.

President Pinson said, "We thank God for Brother Tippett and his faithful ministry at FWBBC. He has given his life for this college. He's a true friend, an example of Christian maturity, and a trusted colleague in the Lord's work. I know of no person more loved and respected than Bert Tippett. He and Dianne were always there when needs arose. He never stopped learning, never stopped giving, never stopped growing in the Lord. I wish he could do it all over again."

FWBBC honored the Tippetts on June 4 in a sweeping campus event called *The Celebration!* that saw hundreds of alumni and friends gather to salute the beloved couple for 45 years of service. The October-November 2009 issue of *ONE Magazine* and the Fall 2009 issue of *Illumina* (alumni magazine) will include several of the celebration tributes.

"I plan to be on campus frequently as a volunteer in a number of continuing projects, especially in areas of journalism and design, as my circumstances permit," Mr. Tippett said. "God only knows how special I've felt working at FWBBC these four-plus decades. I've walked side-by-side with some of the

noblest people in the Free Will Baptist denomination. They gave me a unique place to serve and challenged me to adapt and grow as ministry opportunities came my way. Looking back now, I wouldn't change a thing."

After graduating in 1962 with a B.A. degree in English, he pastored in New Hampshire before returning to FWBBC in 1965 as director of publications. He maintained a robust schedule that included *Lumen* advisor, journalism and Physical Education instructor, trusted friend to thousands of students, professional photographer, editor of the FWBBC *Bulletin*, and mentor to future Free Will Baptist leaders.

Diagnosed in May 2008 with a highly aggressive and invasive form of prostate cancer, Tippet underwent hormone therapy and chemotherapy, and began a new form of chemotherapy August 17. The cancer has metastasized to the bones, migrated to other areas of the body, and is widespread with PSA levels reaching 76.4 in August.

"I'm in God's hands and in God's will," Bert said, "and that's exactly where I want to be."