

September

Dear hearts:

Towering Oaks Baptist Church has not just been an occupation, but has been my life's calling. This wonderful congregation has been on my heart and mind every day for over 35 years. Because of the investment of my life in this ministry I long to see it not only survive, but to thrive. Several years ago, I began to wrestle with if I would know when it was God's time for me to pass that baton to another under-shepherd. Last year, I felt the release of the Lord to do so.

As a family of faith, we have had many highs and some very difficult times as well. God has been faithful through it all. There have been shared joys, and shared sorrows. Weddings, funerals, ordinations sending sons of the church family into the Gospel Ministry, note burnings (paying off debts), mission trips, walking in Jesus steps with fellow members in trips to the Holyland. I think my greatest joy has been seeing people come to faith and follow Christ in believer's baptism.

Through the years, Shelley and I have seen our sons go into the military and return safely, kids marry and the joy of the birth of several grandchildren. We have had the love and support of the church family during these times of celebration and also when times were hard.

I will be eternally grateful for the staff that the Lord has allowed me to minister alongside over the last 35 years. They have played such an important part in the vision casting, and bringing to fruition the work of the Lord.

The church family has been so loving, understanding, and generous through the years—so many who have gone on home to heaven and their reward. When the saints have graduated to glory, God has brought in faithful brothers and sisters to fill the ministry positions to take on the new challenges and take us higher as we stand on the shoulders of all who have gone before us. While the ministry has taken and continues to take on new shapes, the Message has remained the same—the glorious Gospel of our Savior, and the congregation remains anchored to the final authority of God's Word in all matters of faith and practice.

I do not plan to be a tool placed on the shelf and left to rust or be forgotten. It is my desire, as I hand the leadership over to the new pastor, to support him fully as I would want to be supported. I will direct all pastoral issues that one might bring to me—to him as the spiritual under shepherd of the flock. Hopefully, I will be able to supply preach for other pastors so they can take needed time off, and maybe do some bible studies and focus groups.

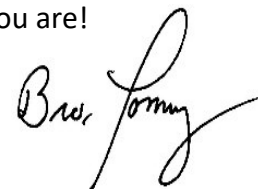
Last November, the church voted to give me the honorary title of Pastor Emeritus upon retirement. The term "emeritus" comes from Latin, meaning "to earn one's discharge by service," and signifies one who has served a distinguished office. It is my desire that will not simply be a title, but that God will continue to use me, and that Towering Oaks will soar to new heights in these coming years.

Until His coming, may we all continue "to know Him and make Him known."

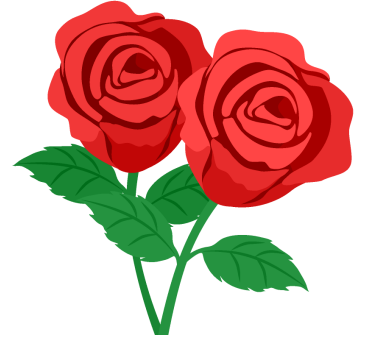
I am sincerely, eternally grateful,

James K. "Tommy" Pierce, III

BTW Always remember and never forget who you are and whose you are!



Roses



I have had the privilege of serving the Lord alongside Tommy for these 35 years. I was just a “kid” with three preschool children when we arrived. The new adventure both terrified and excited me.

I have grown up here. Thank you for loving me and not forcing me into a box of expectations. God teaches me through heartaches and victories. We have walked through both together. Change is difficult for all of us. I do not know what life will look like in the next months, but then...I never do. This one thing I know—God never changes, and He will give us the grace to move into the next chapter.

I know you are going to love the wife of our new pastor. I know you will befriend her and show her grace.

Roses

Tommy has shared the story of a Cajun friend of ours many years ago telling him to give people their roses while they can still smell them.

Twenty-two years ago, the church family voted, and I became a member of the staff under the title Director of Children’s Ministries. So, you see, it has been a privilege to work with Tommy as a part of his ministry team.

Here are my roses for my boss.

Integrity is who he is. Having served in this capacity I have received encouragement to stay in the word, pray for the church family, live a life that aligns with the calling of ministry, the admonition to remain above reproach, and treat all people with love and respect. Do not forget volunteer hours—our church families work a job and give time serving, so should we. Celebrate the wins. Learn from the loss. Give God glory for/in both.

He is known to say “Just do the right thing” both in the office and with family.

Roses for my husband.

Integrity is who he is. If you sat down around our dinner table, you would witness the same man you know at church. He does not just say “Remember who you are and Whose you are,” he lives it. Our children can testify along with me, Tommy’s love for the Lord motivates him every day.

Integrity is who he is. I have witnessed his hours of study and prayer. His heartbreak for the lost. His weeping for the people of Towering Oaks.

Integrity is who he is. I married this man almost forty-four years ago. When I said, “I do” and “I will” I was clueless as to what that meant. All I knew was God had given me the godliest man I have ever known. We have cried many tears together, the saddest and the happiest. He remains the godliest man I have ever known.

Thank you, Boss, for being the real deal. Thank you for teaching me as you led us. Thank you for your dedication and faithful love.

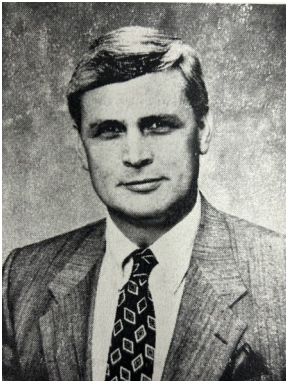
Tommy’s not going home to place a blanket on his lap and rock himself to sleep. God has much more for him to accomplish and I am so happy to travel this road with him!

I look forward to the future for all of us. I love you all and am thankful to continue to be your director of preschool and children’s ministries until God changes my path.

Know that Yahweh your God is God, the faithful God who keeps His gracious covenant loyalty for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments. Deuteronomy 7:9

Let us celebrate the goodness of God together as He allows us the next chapter of serving, loving, learning, and proclaiming “YES, Lord!”

Shelley



Where Are We Now?

Over the course of the past thirty-five years, the Towering Oaks Baptist Church family has been richly blessed. Brother Tommy began leading this fellowship in April of 1990, and through his leadership the Lord has provided in so many ways:

- Membership - 1,116 individuals have been baptized and entered the fellowship as members of Towering Oaks. Another 1,023 joined by transfer of letter or statement of faith; thus, bringing church additions to a total of 2,139.

- Financially - In 1990, the total church property was valued at \$2,074,600, carried a \$810,000 mortgage, and maintained a \$402,738 budget. Today, Towering Oaks is Debt Free and valued at more than \$20,000,000 and has aggregated ministries' budgets of around \$2,100,000.

- Facilities - The brick-and-mortar that makes up Towering Oaks has been transformed from a chapel with an educational wing into an 83,000 square foot facility. The main Sanctuary, educational space, and Family Life Center additions will serve the Lord's work for many more years. Future ministry expansion opportunities abound, ("Where there is no vision, the people perish..." Proverbs 29:18) and the Lord has blessed Towering Oaks with room to grow; with the acquisition of our Cross Country Track / Bible Walking Trail property, the Mission House, and parking areas, the original land-footprint has increased by 21 acres, to a total of 29.22 acres.

- Christian Education - Early in brother Tommy's tenure, the Towering Oaks Christian School ministry began adding grades. In 1992, grades 7 & 8 were added. Today, the school ministry graduates high schoolers with superior education and the instilling of strong Christian values & understanding.

- Technology - In 1992, Towering Oaks went "digital," and fully computerized church records. Through the years, technology was embraced for Kingdom purposes; Towering Oaks now maintains a strong online presence through its websites and multi-platform online streaming. As well, this year, all School financials have been digitally integrated.

- Missions - Throughout brother Tommy's leadership tenure, "missions" has been a continuing focal point. Mission trips within the U.S., Mexico, and Asia have been accomplished. Towering Oaks now directly supports missionaries, while it also maintains its strong support of associational missions.

- Spiritual Growth - For 35 years, the Towering Oaks family has been the recipient of pure, theologically sound, biblical teaching & preaching. Many dozens of teachers and staff have received a fine lesson in pastor/teacher leadership through brother Tommy's stalwart delivery of Biblical Truth. This church body has been prepared for our next step in discipleship & enjoyed the spiritual maturing that comes from the bold & undiluted proclamation of God's Word.

The mantel is being passed. May we honor the faithfulness of all that have come before us... especially our dear friend & shepherd, Dr. James K. "Tommy" Pierce.

God is So Good!

Thank The Lord for his many blessings, and thank brother Tommy for his faithful service, shepherding, & stewardship.

"His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant..."
Matthew 25:23

In His Grip,
Brother Greg



News from the Underground!!!

Hello again, TOBC family and friends! Hard to believe but September is upon us and I don't know about you, but I am ready for some Fall weather! We seem to have had more rain this August than I can remember so I hope it pays off with some spectacular Fall colors this year!

This August has also been a time of transition for the youth down in the Underground. School has started and that means we have new members in the youth group that have moved up. We say "Welcome to the group"! We also had several members move on to college and we pray the best for them as they start a new chapter in their life.

On Wednesday, August 6th we had a family fun night at Pioneer Mini Golf in Tusculum. It was a great night to be out together with the youth and parents. We hope to have more outings this fall and build on the community we share together.

August has also been an entire month of the study on the Gospel of Mark. Sunday morning and Wednesday night lessons have focused on a chapter by chapter study with the theme of "Finding Jesus in the book of Mark".

One message from our lessons this month I would share with anyone reading our newsletter comes from Mark chapters 4 and 5. In chapter 4 the disciples find themselves on a boat with Jesus, but in the middle of a terrible storm. Jesus rebukes the storm and all is well except for the fact that, according to verse 41, the disciples were "terrified". Even as eye witnesses they struggled with believing.

However, in chapter 5 the disciples would witness faith in action and a lack of faith in a single encounter. This duality represents their struggle, and ours at times. While Jesus was on his way to see a sick, dying girl, a woman in the crowd who suffered terribly touched Jesus's clothes. Immediately Jesus said "Who touched me?" Hundreds of people were crowding around Him yet He knew what took place. The woman was healed and fell at His feet and Jesus said to her in verse 34: "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering."

As they traveled on to the house of Jairus, they were informed they were too late, the girl had died. Overhearing their conversions Jesus said to the girl's father in verse 36: "Don't be afraid; just believe." When they arrived at the house Jesus assured them everything was ok, but in verse 40 we are told they laughed at Jesus. Can you fathom that, laughing at Him? But Jesus went into the girl's room and raised her from the dead!

Let us all remember the words Jesus said and let these words guide us through storms that lay before us: Do not be afraid, just believe!



It has been an honor and pleasure to know Pastor Tommy. His messages are from a servant's heart and I have been blessed to learn from his teachings. When I think of Pastor Tommy I cannot help but to reflect back on the parable Jesus taught in Matthew 25, where the master of the house goes on a long journey and entrusts his home to his servants. When the master returned, he made his servants accountable for their actions on his behalf in his absence. Some servants did well, others did not. However, I believe with all my heart that Pastor Tommy is like the FAITHFUL servant Jesus spoke about in this parable and I have no doubt one day, many years from now, Pastor Tommy will hear these words from Jesus: well done, good and faithful servant!

Well done Pastor Tommy! You are a good and faithful servant indeed!

Todd

Dear T.O.B.C. family,

The school ministry is off to a great beginning for the 2025-26 school year. Please pray that many professions of faith are made in and through this important ministry of our church. I'm grateful to say that **TSA Days are Back!**



Get ready for the 2nd annual "TSA Days" fundraising weekend on **September 19-20, 2025!** Come support our Technology Student Association chapter and their mission to build future innovators. We'll have a silent auction, a car wash, a kid zone, spaghetti supper, all-day breakfast, and more. Students will be pre-selling meal tickets as well as car wash tickets for \$10.00 each. To learn more about how to donate, become a vendor, or just get involved, scan the QR code to visit our official event page!

I will greatly miss working alongside Brother Tommy on the school ministry's important business, and I ask that you join me in prayer for him as he begins his new journey.

In Christ,

Amy Pfaff-Biebel

Towering Oaks Christian School

Administrator



Church Offices **CLOSED**

SEP 01



Come be a part of a wonderful afternoon of fellowship!



PaceSetters

Monday,

September 15

11:30 in the chapel

Shoebox packing &

Covered dish meal

(fried chicken provided). Please bring a side dish.



Wednesdays for kids! 6:00-7:00



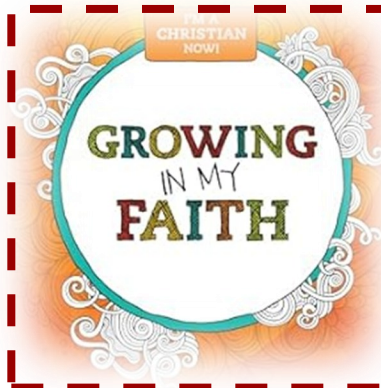
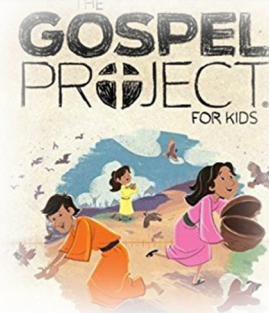
We have a great class for preschool kids.

Safe. Clean.

God-centered, loving teaching.

Kindergarten– 4th Grades

We want to see your kids on Wednesdays for great Bible learning where every passage shows us Jesus, our Savior! We have fantastic teachers ready for purposeful fun!



5th/6th Graders in the

CrossTrain Room

Friendship. Laughter.

Bible learning that makes a difference for preteens today.

Towering Oaks Autumn Adventures & Festive Flannels

We are excited to give our church family the opportunity to reach our community in a new way.

Sunday, October 26



Chili Cook-off Miniature Golf Marshmallow/hot dog Roasting
Prayer Tent Live Music Scavenger Hunt/Nature Walk
Pumpkin Carving Photo Opps Face Painting Treat Bags for Kids
Games & more

Get excited, sign up to be a part, and plan now **WHO** you will invite:

family, friends, co-workers, ball team families, your mail carrier, store clerk...

for some great, downhome autumn fun that honors Jesus!

More info coming your way soon!

