

William H. Lavender, II

Ministry Biography

Overview

I was born in San Diego, California in 1968. I grew up in several places in California due to my father's job relocations as a Federal Civil Service employee with the Department of the Navy. We moved from San Diego, California to El Centro, California in 1970. My parents became members of the El Centro Baptist Tabernacle in 1971, a new church plant under the leadership of pastor Tom McCrary. Tom McCrary started the El Centro Baptist Tabernacle in El Centro, California under the authority of the Alice Avenue Baptist Church (currently *North Village Baptist Church*).¹

Alice Avenue Baptist Church was planted by the late Charles Vaden, who mentored Tom McCrary in the ministry. Charles Vaden was sent to plant the Alice Avenue Baptist Church in Phoenix, Arizona in 1961 by the Akron Baptist Temple (currently *Connect Church*) during the pastorate of the late Dallas F. Billington (1903-1971).²

My parents were active members in the El Centro Baptist Tabernacle from 1971 to 1977. My mother was a Sunday School teacher, and my father was appointed to be the Sunday School Bus Director. My parents left the church in 1977. My mother never returned to an active church life after being part of the El Centro Baptist Tabernacle and died in 1993. My father finally went back to being an active church member in 2008 at the China Lake Baptist Church in Ridgecrest, California where serves as a Trustee.

In 1979, our family moved to Ridgecrest, California where I graduated from the Sherman E. Burroughs High School in 1986. I joined the U.S. Army under the Delayed Entry Program (DEP) in April 1986 prior to graduating from High School. While serving in the U.S. Army, I surrendered to Christ's call to the ministry at the Temple Baptist Church in Lacey, Washington under the leadership of pastor Mike Kinney.

Salvation Testimony

I came to know Christ at an early age. In 1973, our church hosted its annual revival week services with Evangelist David Sproul. The Evangelist's wife taught the toddler class of which I was a part. The curiosity of Heaven intrigued me and so I began to ask my parents about Heaven. They informed me that Heaven was where God lived. I then inquired as to how one goes there. They began to tell me that one goes to Heaven by asking Jesus into your heart. My mother then instructed me to see the teacher of my class after the class was over. Mrs. Sproul asked me if I wanted to get saved. I affirmed my desire for salvation and then she knelt beside me and told me to repeat some words. I could not remember what those words. After she prayed silently, she then asked me if I was saved. I nodded in the affirmative. The reason that I did that was because I noticed that my mother was watching from a distance and I did not want to get into trouble for not getting saved. Later, I would learn that the words that I could not remember were the Sinner's Prayer.

A few months after this, while saying my evening prayers beside my bed, my five-year-old curiosity aroused again. This time I prayed these words, "Jesus come into my heart". Immediately it was so. Words cannot describe the washing of cleansing that rushed through my soul and the joy that penetrated my heart and mind. Titus 3:5 describes

¹ "About Us," North Village Baptist Church, accessed December 10, 2020, <https://www.northvillage.org/home/what-you-ll-find-at-north-village>; c.f. "Rev Charles Newton Vaden," Find A Grave, accessed December 10, 2020, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/49745011/charles-newton-vaden#:~:text=Vaden%20Viola%20G.%20Ulrich%20Vaden%20Killed%20in%20an,plane%20when%20they%20hit%20bad%20weather%20and%20crashed.>

² "Akron Baptist Temple Pastor Will Step Down: Dallas R. Billington Heeds Calling," RedOrbit, accessed December 10, 2020, [https://www.redorbit.com/news/science/399533/akron_baptist_temple_pastor_will_step_down_dallas_r_billington/.](https://www.redorbit.com/news/science/399533/akron_baptist_temple_pastor_will_step_down_dallas_r_billington/)

William H. Lavender, II

Ministry Biography

my salvation experience perfectly. It says, “*Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, **by the washing of regeneration**[emphasis mine], and renewing of the Holy Ghost.*” Afterwards, I knew that if I died at anytime after that moment that I would go to Heaven and be with Christ.

Ministry Calling

Christ called me to full-time ministry in 1987 while serving in the United States Army at Fort Lewis, Washington. I had been attending the Temple Baptist Church in Lacey, Washington. My parents had quit going to church in 1977 and did not get involved in a church again until after I left home in 1986. During these formative years between 1977 and 1986, there was not a strong spiritual influence in my life and the growth and discipleship that should have characterized my years since my conversion were largely unknown. I knew that I was saved despite the circumstances. I had visited this little church in Lacey, Washington after learning that one of the men in my unit was attending it and I asked if I could go along. After attending this church for several months, my faith began to grow rapidly. There I learned the importance of personal evangelism, daily Bible reading and prayer, as well as separation of worldliness.

While reading the Gospel of Luke one Saturday afternoon, I began reading chapter nine. Christ began convicting my heart. When I got to verse fifty-nine and sixty, God spoke to my mind and heart through these verses and they became a directive from on high. Luke 9:59-60 reads as follows; “*And he said unto another, **Follow me** [emphasis mine]. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: **but go thou and preach the kingdom of God**” [emphasis mine]. It was as though God, Himself, was pointing directly at me saying “go and preach” right there in my barracks room. I was not sure what to do. I did not sleep very well that night and could not wait to see my pastor the next day. When I got a chance to speak with him after the service, I started my sentence out by nervously saying, “I think God’s calling me to preach.” I then realized that was not correct and then with confidence, I more boldly said, “No that is not correct. God has called me to preach.” I then related this testimony to my pastor about my Bible study in my barracks room. He agreed that Christ was in fact calling me to full-time service through the avenue of preaching. This was my call to ministry.*

In December of 1987, I submitted to Believer’s Baptism at Temple Baptist Church in Lacey, Washington after realizing that I had not followed Christ in this first step of obedience after my conversion as a child. I credit the great influence of pastor Mike Kinney on my early discipleship training and lifelong walk with Christ.

I submitted to Christ’s will for my life to be a preacher of the gospel and left the Army in 1988 at the end of my enlistment and went to Jacksonville, Florida to enroll in Bible College at the Trinity Baptist College.

Ministry Experience

Church Planter/Senior Pastor

Liberty Baptist Church; El Paso, Texas

September 2019-Present

Associate Pastor

Hunter Park Baptist Church; Jacksonville, Florida

January 1997-November 1999

Discipleship Small Group Leader

Thomas Road Baptist Church, Lynchburg, Virginia

April 2014-April 2017

Ministry Intern: Adult Ministries

Thomas Road Baptist Church; Lynchburg, Virginia

January 2016-May 2016

William H. Lavender, II

Ministry Biography

Bivocational Ministry of Helps

| | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| Various Independent Baptist Churches | February 2000-February 2014 |
| • Central Baptist Church; Sierra Vista, Arizona | October 2004-September 2005 |
| • Hohenfels Baptist Church; Hohenfels, Germany | May 2003-August 2004 |
| • Rhein Valley Baptist Church; Wiesbaden, Germany | May 2002-May 2003 |
| • Victory Baptist Church; Columbus, Georgia | June 2000-September 2001 |

Ordination Council Member

| | |
|---|------------|
| Northside Baptist Church; Nolanville, Texas | April 2008 |
|---|------------|

Ministry Education

Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.), Candidate

| | |
|--|------------------------|
| Liberty University Rawlings School of Divinity; Lynchburg, Virginia | September 2016-Present |
| • Specialization: Pastoral Leadership | |
| • Thesis Research: Ministry Models for Effective Ministry Among Hispanic Millennials. | |

Master of Divinity (M.Div.)

| | |
|---|-------------|
| Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary; Lynchburg, Virginia | August 2016 |
| • Specialization: Pastoral Ministry | |

Bachelor of Arts (B.A.),

| | |
|---|----------|
| Trinity Baptist Church; Jacksonville, Florida | May 1997 |
| • Specialization: Pastoral Theology, Church Administration | |

Military Service and Awards

United States Army, Enlisted

| | |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| Fort Lewis, Washington | August 1986-May 1988 |
|------------------------|----------------------|

United States Army Reserve, Enlisted

| | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Jacksonville, Florida | May 1988-January 1989 |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|

United States Army, Enlisted

| | |
|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Fort Ord, California | January 1989-January 1993 |
|----------------------|---------------------------|

United States Army, Commissioned Officer

| | |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| Fort Bliss, Texas | November 1999-February 2014 |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|

Combat Deployments

| | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Operation Desert Shield/Storm | November 1990-April 1991 |
| Operation Iraqi Freedom II | January 2004-August 2004 |
| Operation Iraqi Freedom (06-08) | October 2006-December 2007 |
| Operation Iraqi Freedom (09-10) | January 2009-December 2009 |

Military Awards

Bronze Star (Service); Meritorious Service Medal (1 Oakleaf Cluster); Army Commendation Medal (4 Oakleaf Clusters); Army Achievement Medal (2 Oakleaf Clusters); Army Good Conduct Medal (2 Knots); National Defense Service Medal (1 Campaign Star); Southwest Asia Service Medal (3 Campaign Stars); Operation Iraqi

William H. Lavender, II

Ministry Biography

Freedom Service Medal (3 Campaign Stars); Global War on Terrorism Service Medal (Expeditionary); Global War on Terrorism Medal Service Medal (Service); Humanitarian Service Medal; Combat Action Badge.

Community Activities and Organizations

I am a Life Member of the following organizations:

- Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)
- Disabled American Veterans (DAV)
- 1st Cavalry Division Association
- 7th Infantry Regiment Association
- National Rifle Association (NRA)

Hobbies and Interests

My hobbies and interests include the following:

- Backpacking/Hiking
- Blogging
- Camping, Fishing
- Shooting
- Playing Guitar
- Plastic Scale Modeling

Marriage and Family

I am married to the former Heather Swan of Evergreen, Colorado. They married on December 18, 2007. We have three children, William (born 2009), Bridget (born 2012), and Josiah (born 2015).