

LEAVING A LEGACY

Jeff Farmer will retire as president of Open Bible Churches on January 2, 2012. In a letter dated December 20, 2010, Dr. Farmer, stated, "I believe I will have completed the contributions God called me to make in this office. His direction from the beginning has been to lead toward missional alignment among our regions, and to create a culture of active faith that embraces accountability because of the growth our mission promises. We are there virtually at the leadership level, and within our movement are many fine examples of local churches experiencing new conversion growth. It has been my joy and humble privilege to serve the Open Bible family. I will forever be grateful for God's call, and for the generous grace extended by each of you to my wife, Ramona, and to me, for the honor of serving you over 16 years in this office."

Since assuming his duties as president September 1, 1995, Dr. Farmer has led Open Bible Churches through many changes, including placing a woman on the national board, restructuring the national office, beginning the Open Bible Service Foundation, publishing two highly respected Open Bible/Pentecostal history books, creating a national archives department, and installing a beautiful nearly half-ton spherical globe historical marker on the grounds of the national office on the corner of Fleur and Bell. However, many in Open Bible may not be aware of Jeff's influence in the greater Body of Christ, according to the following statement by OBC President Elect, Randall Bach:

Jeff has served on the boards and executive committees of many national boards, but the two groups most important for Open Bible's involvement are the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) and the Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches of North America (PCCNA). Jeff has served as the vice chairman of NAE, and would have served as chairman had he not declined because of sensitivity to the need for breadth of doctrinal representation at the upper leadership tier. Simultaneously, Jeff has served as chairperson of

PCCNA. In both organizations, the members selected Jeff for his leadership roles. I recently had opportunity to interact with members and leaders of both NAE and PCCNA who wanted to convey to me their high commendations and expressions of love and appreciation for Jeff Farmer's leadership in those organizations. In fact, the PCCNA has asked Jeff to continue on as chairperson, the first time someone who is not the CEO of a member group will lead PCCNA. Compared to many denominational groups and church networks, Open Bible is not large. However, Jeff's leadership role and influence in NAE and PCCNA have been disproportionately large. He has had an exceptionally distinguished record of service on behalf of Open Bible Churches to the foremost Evangelical and Pentecostal/Charismatic organizations in North America. Many influential leaders in North America know about and appreciate Open Bible Churches because of Jeff Farmer's ambassadorship on our behalf.



Dr. Jeff Farmer

Through his position as chairperson of PCCNA Jeff waged war on malaria by launching a campaign to encourage PCCNA denominations (of which Open Bible is a charter member), other denominational churches, and para-church organizations to partner with World Vision and raise money for bed nets that will save the lives of millions of African children.

Jeff and his lovely, gracious wife, Ramona, are well loved and respected within the Open Bible family as well, as evidenced by the abundance of cards and gifts they received at their farewell reception at convention. Probably one of the best summations of Jeff's leadership was written in a letter by Karl Francis, senior pastor of Living Word Open Bible Church in Cooper City, Florida: "You have led Open Bible Churches to another level that was 'for such a time as this.' You taught us and demonstrated the importance of relying on and being guided by the Holy Spirit. Coupled by your emphasis on the importance of the Holy Spirit was your passion for the harvest. Thanks for being a man after God's own heart."

