

STAND BY ME

CAMERON WADE (12) AND LYDIA POOLE (12)
TRANSFER SCHOOLS AFTER
BIBLE BAPTIST CLOSES

Design by Chandler Prevatt.
Photo by Brandon Brooks.

As Lydia Poole (12) sat down for the interview, she recalled “the” day. She walked down the long, narrow hallway, seeing the same faces she saw nearly everyday. She made her way to homeroom, passing familiar grey lockers. She set down her bookbag and took her seat at the front corner of the class. The class was quiet as the teacher read a devotion from the same little book she read from all year. It was the same as any other day.

Her mom picked her up from school early. A text flashed across her phone. She was confused. She was shocked.

Friday after school, Cameron Wade (12) went to work at the JEA as usual. After his shift ended, he left and made his way home. A WSAV news article caught his attention. He knew it was going to happen, but he did not know it would be so soon.

The two recalled how they felt. He laughed and looked in her direction.

“I’ll let you start because I had a completely different reaction,” Wade said.

“[When I found out Bible Baptist was closing], I was really sad,” Poole said.

Wade shook his head. Smiling, he looked down. He knew where she was going with this.

“Bible was like my second home, but I didn’t cry or get upset immediately,” Poole said. “It didn’t hit me right away. Then I got home - it was the weekend - and I started thinking about stuff, and things that I’d be doing my senior year, and then I kind of shed a few tears.”

Poole had attended Bible Baptist since she was five years old. She considered Bible her home. Wade, on the other hand, transferred to Bible his freshman year. With a less than enjoyable freshman year, Bible was just a school to Wade.

“I don’t want to say that I was elated, but I was elated [when I found out about Bible closing], but just because I hadn’t been there as long as Lydia,” Wade said. “I had only been there for three years and I had a bad freshman year, so it’s not like I had good memories there. My sophomore and junior years were better, but I dreaded going to school everyday. I

just didn’t like the environment.”

She looked at him with a knowing smile. Though she did not share the same feelings, she understood and accepted his.

“Yeah, we’re kind of opposite about this,” Poole said.

With low funding, low enrollment numbers, and limited programs, some Bible Baptist students, like Wade, knew their school would close soon. Others were not expecting it to happen so quickly.

“When I found out Bible was closing, I wasn’t surprised or anything. It was just something I expected at some point,” Wade said. “The only thing that bothered me about the whole situation was that I had to find out from the news instead of the Head Master. I felt bad for my classmates, though, because they didn’t deserve that.”

Like the rest of the population at Bible, Poole and Wade had a decision to make: where they would choose to finish their high school careers. Upon announcing Bible’s closure, the school recommended its students to consider attending Calvary.

“One of the reasons why I went to Bible was because I wanted to be going to a private school so I just stayed there all my life,” Poole said. “So it was either [Calvary] or public school and everyone else was going [to Calvary].”

Though some students considered other options, many of her fellow classmates shared a desire to stick together. After some consideration, Poole and Wade both chose to attend Calvary, along with others from Bible.

“I was thinking about applying to Savannah Arts at first,” Wade said. “Then I gave it some thought and decided that they probably weren’t going to take a senior, plus everyone else was going to Calvary.”

Moving to a new school was hard for Poole and Wade at first, but they felt the new environment with new people warranted an acclimation period. With many former Bible students attending, the transition was easier as old friends experienced a new school together.

For Wade, a new school meant a new start with

new opportunities ahead.

“[In getting use to Calvary], I felt a little overwhelmed at first, and then I took a deep breath and was like, ‘This really isn’t that bad,’” Wade said.

For Poole, the transition was bittersweet. New opportunities surfaced, like Drama Club and Advanced Placement classes, while other opportunities she felt like she missed.

“I’ve enjoyed it here, but I’ll be honest with you though. I feel like I’ve missed some opportunities. For example, I feel like I would have been on the homecoming court at Bible,” Poole said. “However, there are opportunities here that I wouldn’t have had at Bible, like drama. I was in One Act, which I really enjoyed. We didn’t have a drama department at Bible. I think [moving to Calvary] was like 50/50 in some ways.”

Wade disagreed. He gave her a funny look.

“No, Lydia there are like no regrets at all,” Wade said.

Though the two held very opposing views concerning their former school, Wade and Poole

became better friends thanks to the move.

“We weren’t really friends at first because you turned me down in ninth grade,” Wade said.

They chuckled, remembering the awkward start to their friendship.

“I guess it was like eleventh grade that we started hanging out, so last year. She was less annoying then so...,” Wade said.

They laughed and joked with each other.

“Yeah, so was he,” Poole said.

After the interview ended, the two friends walked down the wide hallway of their new school, laughing and joking. They passed by the tan lockers as they headed down the stairs together to their sixth period English class. They settled into class.

This was their home now. *Story by Taylor Bandy.*

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CAMERON WADE (12)

