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WTLU-TV goes digital, improves coverage

April 01, 2010 ¦ Sarah Deskins

WTLU-TV, which broadcasts the Liberty Channel from Liberty University's campus, now has a new digital on-air signal. Chancellor Jerry Falwell, Jr. took part in a ribbon-cutting ceremony in early January marking the change at the station.

Chancellor Jerry Falwell, Jr. flips the switch to activate the new digital transmitter for WTLU-TV, which broadcasts the Liberty Channel, on Jan. 8.

Since its inception in 1991, WTLU has been committed to providing family-friendly television for the greater Lynchburg area. The Liberty Channel showcases "Live from Liberty," featuring Liberty University convocations; Pulpit Classics from the library of the "Old Time Gospel Hour"; weekly services preached by Jonathan Falwell, senior pastor of Thomas Road Baptist Church; "Gaither Homecoming Tour"; "In Touch with Charles Stanley"; and many other family-friendly programs.

"Most of the programs that are on secular television and cable stations are not appropriate for the entire family," said Sandra Wagner, WTLU station manager. "WTLU is really the only family based package in this area."

WTLU originally transmitted from Liberty Mountain for 13 years, but was forced to relocate its facility to neighboring Johnson Mountain in 2004 due to industry digital transmitting requirements. The station's Johnson Mountain transmission location limited the reach of the Liberty Channel, causing some viewers to lose access.

The relocation of the new transmitter site to Monogram Hill on Liberty Mountain, paired with the transition from analog to digital transmission, enables WTLU to provide an enhanced viewing experience and maintain industry standards in light of the industry-wide conversion to digital television in June 2009. The cost of the entire project was $625,000.

"This change brings us up to modern standards," said Chancellor Falwell. "The entire industry is moving to digital and now we are ready for HDTV."

Now that the station has converted to digital transmission, Falwell said WTLU will continue its goal to extend coverage.

"Our goal is to eventually take the signal produced by Liberty Channel and disseminate it wider, maybe even nationally," he said. "It's just one more way for people to hear about LU and to spread the Gospel."