



WACO REGIONAL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

WRBA is a voluntary network of Baptist churches in Central Texas who have chosen to cooperate in order to extend and embody the good news of Jesus Christ.

February 2016



Volume 17, Issue 2

FROM YOUR DIRECTOR

The Strategy Planning Team presented a plan of work for the next five years. This was approved by the board. The new, future-oriented vision statement is: *“An association of healthy churches transforming communities through the love of Christ.”*



The words of this statement may or may not be true for your church ... **yet.**

“An association” may not be true for your church because as members of the association, your membership may not be connecting, meeting and working with any other churches. You are functioning by yourselves.

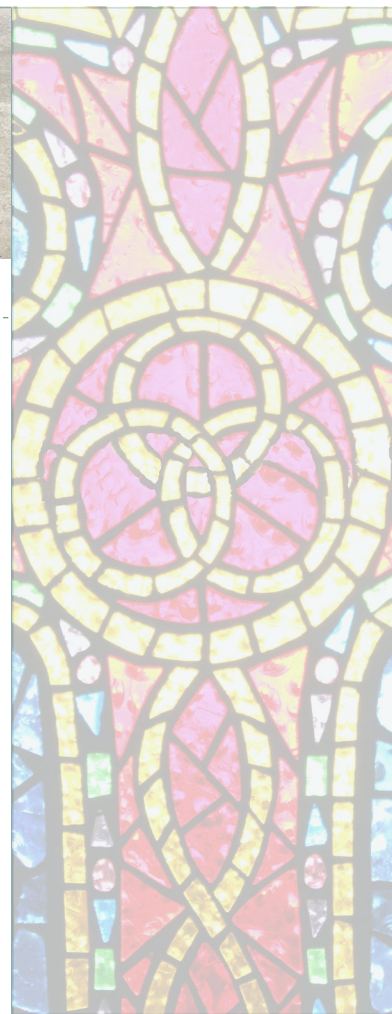
“Healthy” may not apply to your church ... **yet** ... because new believers are not being reproduced regularly. For you, our church strengthening team has just released a new resource called “The Body of Christ - a Church Strengthening Process.” I would love to share this resource with you as you explore ways to become a healthy, strong body of believers.

“Transforming communities” is **not yet** a reality for many churches. Some churches are focused on maintaining services and activities for their members, while their neighborhoods hardly notice they are there. Lives in the area have not been touched and changed by the good news of Jesus spilling out of the church walls.

“Through the love of Christ” may not be true for your church. Hard times, changes, stress and struggles have tested that love for Christ. Although that love is there, it is not seen lavishly practiced, transforming and overflowing.

So you see, we are embracing a vision that is truly beyond us. And yet, with His power working in us and through us, the years ahead can be exciting, challenging, rewarding, and fruitful. I look forward to working with you to become all that God has called us to be.

In His Service,
Tim



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Director Of Missions Article....1
- Upcoming Events2
- Matching Grant.....2
- Associate Director Article.....3
- Calendar of Events.....3
- Retuning Missionaries.....4
- Churches without Pastors.....4

UPCOMING EVENTS

March Ministers Round Table (Ministry Guidance Conference) 12:00pm on March 2 at Truett

Topic: Missional Churches, Ministry Guidance Conference
Speaker: Dennis and Cindy Wiles, Missionaries

Please make a reservation by **February 25**. Contact Louine Adams at Louine_adams@baylor.edu or 254-710-3739.



“Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.” John 4:7-8

CONTRIBUTE TO WRBA'S MATCHING GRANT

To contribute, go to Waco Foundation's website: www.wacofoundation.org/BecomeaDonor/MakeaDonation.aspx

Click on "Make a Donation." From the drop down menu, select "Ministry and Missions Endowment Fund of the Waco Regional Baptist Association" and then follow the other directions.



New Church Strengthening Process

The WRBA Church Strengthening Team is ready to offer your church a new way to talk about your church body – using the 12 Human Body Systems as an analogy. This is complete with 40 daily devotionals written by Central Texas church leaders, sermon ideas, 24 real life stories of churches that demonstrate healthy and dysfunctional body systems, and assessments for leaders and church members. Call the WRBA office at 254-753-2408 for more information.



Matching Contribution Challenge

Through the generous offer of the Waco Foundation to match a portion of donations, WRBA has a chance to significantly increase the M&M fund. The fund sponsors local grants to support churches/ministries in their efforts to support the community.

Each donation can be matched. Would you help us help others?

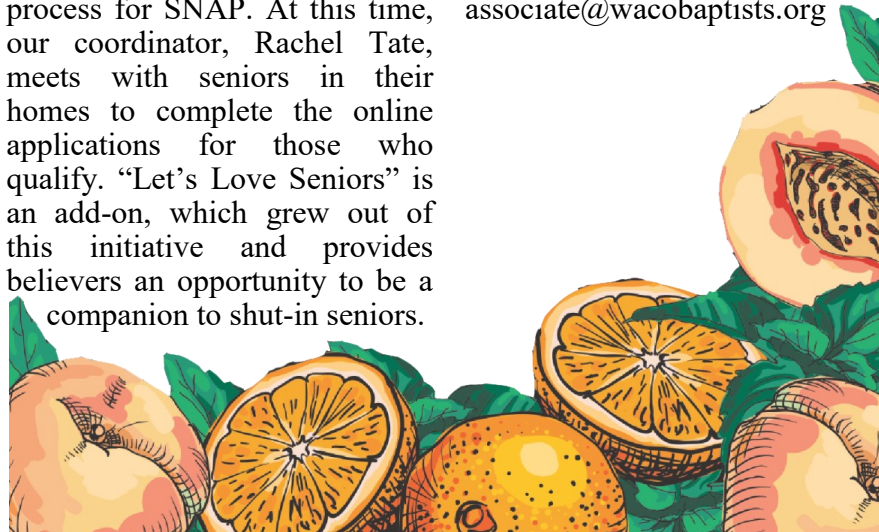


FROM YOUR ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

Our WRBA Hunger Ministry has two grants which are scheduled to end in 2016: *Hunger in God's World & Cooking Matters* in March and the *SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) Senior Outreach Program* in April. The first was developed to dispel hunger myths and teach about the epidemic which affects one in ten people, discuss what the Bible says about hunger and what response God desires of His people, discover what one person or an entire congregation can do to combat hunger, and to teach cooking nutritious, seasonal food on a limited budget. The SNAP Senior Outreach program was designed to address a need among seniors regarding food insecurity and the application process for SNAP. At this time, our coordinator, Rachel Tate, meets with seniors in their homes to complete the online applications for those who qualify. "Let's Love Seniors" is an add-on, which grew out of this initiative and provides believers an opportunity to be a companion to shut-in seniors.

These programs were designed to put tools in the hands of our WRBA churches to help them to minister to their members and surrounding communities. We have trained, gotten referrals and met with seniors, **but not enough responses have come from WRBA churches.** Thus, I urge you to not let these opportunities pass you by. We have people who are hurting in our churches and communities that you can help at this time. Please call our office at 254-753-2408 and get involved!

Evelyn Ofong
Associate Director
associate@wacobaptists.org



FEBRUARY EVENTS

February 3, 12:00pm
Ministers Roundtable
Truett Seminary
Topic: Race Relations
Reservations: by January 28

February 8, 1:00pm
RA Pinewood Derby
Columbus Avenue

February 8-14
Focus on WMU

February 12, 12:00pm
Networking and Missions
Team Meeting
FBC Waco, Conference Rm

February 13
Children's Ministry Day

February 16, 4:00pm
Board Meeting
Meeting
WRBA

February 29, 12:00pm
Leadership Development
Team Meeting
Calvary Baptist

March 2, 10:00am
Ministry Guidance Conference
Topic: Missions
Reservations: by February 25

March 2, 12:00pm
Ministers Roundtable
Truett Seminary
(Part of Ministry Guidance
Conference)
Topic: Missional Churches
Reservations: by February 25

March 3, 4:15pm
Missions Development Team
Meeting
WRBA, Garden Room

March 4-5
African American Leadership
Workshop
Truett Seminary

March 6-13
Week of Prayer — North
American Missions and Annie
Armstrong Easter Offering

COMMUNITY NEWS

**Please continue to pray
for WRBA churches
seeking a Pastor:**

Downsville
Lorena FBC
Marlin MBC
Old Time
Primera Iglesia
Robinson FBC

HELPING RETURNING MISSIONARIES

With so many missionaries coming home as part of the recent IMB's VRI, we have to ask how we can help in their transition. However, it is better to postulate on our own theories. Here are a few comments about what missionaries really need. It may surprise you how easy it is to help.

Vicki Lassiter has returned after more than 26 years of service in South America. She said, "I know that we follow God's will in coming back.... I think that the thing we need is not just a place to belong, but for churches to recognize that there are people groups all around us and we can help with those people groups. We can bring our unique experience to

help the church fulfill their mandate to reach the people groups living here in TX. That would give a sense of purpose to us when we're wondering why God has brought us back."

Lisa Levdahl has returned after years in South America. She said there are many things they need, like help writing resumes and finding jobs, a listening ear and a need to not feel like a "has been", a chance to grieve the loss of the life they had to suddenly give up, health care, school options for children, cars, housing, understanding legal processes, etc.

She said, "Whether a family is moving into a mission house or renting their own place, a good old fashioned pounding would be welcome."

Waco Regional Baptist Association

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