



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 2015



Volume 16, Issue 2

FROM YOUR DIRECTOR

Last month I attended a meeting of McLennan County Nonprofit organizations where the Mayor of Waco and other civic leaders promoted the idea of making a major impact through collaboration. The effort is called “Prosper Waco.” The main message is that, while there are lots of good organizations doing good things, we are not making the impact in improving our community and the lives of our neighbors because we are not working together. As I listened to the presentation (which was very good), I realized that Baptists learned this a long time ago. In fact, we have been embracing the idea of collaborating to make a greater impact for more than 300 years. Our Association is 155 years old, and we have made a collective impact across the face of this Central Texas region. We continue to make that impact in the area of Student Ministries on the campuses of TSTC and MCC. We are also making an impact every week at the McLennan County Jail as well as in many communities through our Hunger Ministries.



I sometimes have to laugh when the researchers and social scientists “discover” something new that the church has been doing for centuries. We have treasures of gold and silver that we allow to sit on the shelf unused because they have become familiar and we think out of date. But what if the WRBA truly succeeded? What would we see? We would see **a network of strong, healthy churches transforming communities together.**

Thanks for being a part of this beautiful plan of God.

In His Service,
Tim



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FROM YOUR ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

I have discussed the need to hire an intern to assist our Restorative Justice/Jail Ministry (RS/J). WRBA Community Ministries is accepting applications for this position. The intern’s primary responsibility will be to help us identify the WRBA churches that are actively involved in prison/jail ministries so that we can open a dialogue with them; to acquaint all WRBA churches with what the association office is currently doing and to get feedback on the programs. Before we develop the next five-year plan, we want to assess if what we are doing is enough, and if current activities are in the areas in which our WRBA churches

feel we are maximizing resources. Should we be adding to or refocusing our attention on other areas within RS/J? The research intern will help us answer these questions.

This person should be able to utilize professional research principles and practices, to design survey questions, analyze results and translate findings into workable recommendations. For more information on qualifications and how to apply for this position, please visit the WRBA website (www.wacobaptists.org) or contact 254-753-2408.

Evelyn Ofong
Associate Director
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“Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.”
I Corinthians 13:4-8

UPCOMING

D-NOW WEEKENDS

January 30—February 1
Meadowbrook Baptist Church

February 27—March 1
Oak Grove Baptist Church

March 28—March 30
Crawford FBC

UPCOMING EVENTS

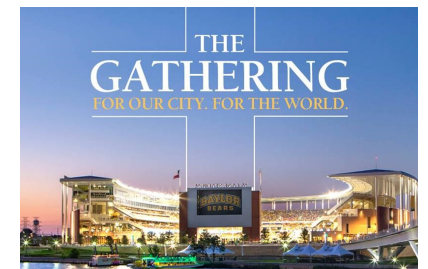
**March Ministers Round Table
(Ministry Guidance Conference)
12:00pm on March 4 at Truett**

Topic: Church and State Relations
Speaker: Ferrell Foster, BGCT

Please make a reservation by **February 26.**
Contact Louine at Louine_Adams@baylor.edu or 710-3739.

THE GATHERING WACO
5:00-7:00pm on Sunday, March 29
Baylor's McLane Stadium
Admission is free, but seating is limited

Keynote Speaker is Dr. Tony Evans.
For more information, visit
www.thegatheringwaco.com.



HUNGER MINISTRY SPOTLIGHT

The WRBA Hunger Ministry is organizing outreach activities for our member churches to have the opportunity to come together to serve organizations which are in need of Christian servants here in Waco. Jesus' last words to us before He was taken up to be with the Father were "Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone."

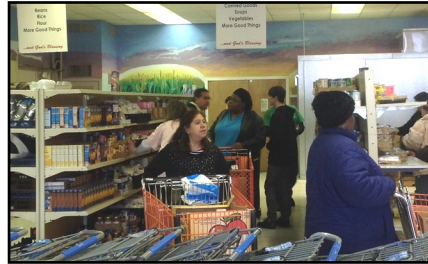
Last month, on the 2nd Saturday, a group of 27 volunteers came together to serve at Shepherd's Heart Food Pantry in 35 degree weather! Six of our member churches were represented! They were Acts Church, Highland Baptist Church, Harris Creek Baptist Church, China Spring Baptist Church, La Vega Community Church and Woodway FBC. As people lined up in the shopping line, breakfast bars, bananas and hot coffee was offered. There were prayers shared and numbers exchanged. Volunteers encouraged each other as they shared the love of Christ with the local community. Carrying groceries to the car was never more fun!

Everyone is in need of hope and the love and help of community connections that only a church community can provide. We saw it in action on Saturday, Jan. 10.

If you want to find ways to serve, find or post outreach various opportunities on the Act Locally Waco website (www.actlocallywaco.org).

Watch the WRBA updates and newsletter for more information about the 2nd Saturday in Feb. It will fall on Valentine's Day and will be a great day to share God's love!

Conway Del Conte
Hunger Ministry Coordinator
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Top: People shop at Shepherd's Heart.
Bottom Left: Shepherd's Heart Executive Director Bob Gager and a volunteer.
Bottom Right: Melinda Coats of Highland Baptist is ready to work with a smile.



Top: A volunteer points out fresh produce.
Bottom: Shepherd's Heart shelves quickly empty.



FEBRUARY EVENTS

February 4, 12:00pm
Ministers Roundtable
Truett Seminary
Topic: Homosexuality and the Church
Reservations: by January 29

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

February 9-15
Focus on WMU
Mark 8:31-38
www.wmu.com

February 14
Children's Ministry Day
children@wmu.org

February 14
Valentine's Day

February 17, 4:00pm
Admin Team Meeting
HBMC, Room 502

February 19, 12:00pm
Networking and Missions Team Meeting
Waco FBC, Conference Room

March 1-8
Week of Prayer and Mission Study—Annie Armstrong
Easter Offering
www.namb.net/annie-armstrong

March 4, 10:00am
Baylor Ministry Guidance Conference
Truett Seminary
Reservations: 254-710-3739

March 4, 12:00pm
Ministers Roundtable (with Ministry Guidance Conf.)
Truett Seminary
Topic: Church and State Relations
Reservations: by Feb. 26

March 6-7
BGCT African American Leadership Workshop
Truett Seminary
www.texasbaptists.org/events/AALW

COMMUNITY NEWS

Please continue to pray for WRBA churches seeking a Pastor:

Amistad
Downsville
Hilltop
Lake Shore
Lorena FBC
Marlin MBC
Old Time
Pleasant Olive MBC
Riesel FBC
Robinson FBC
Woodway FBC

CHURCH SPOTLIGHT: OAK GROVE

A church is a place where you expect to find support. That is evident in Oak Grove Baptist Church.

Pastor Dennis Larson said, "They are just such kind, generous, good people. There's never a need that comes up that our church doesn't meet... When they find out there's a need, they respond."

He gave the example of a family who had trouble with a moving company. The church members found out and they brought 20 trucks to help.

Larson said, "I'm excited about this year. Sometimes when you're new as a pastor, it takes a few years to establish a relationship and build trust....

We're at a place where the church is ready to grow."

They moved to two services last year and have recently completed a bathroom and foyer remodel. While these efforts are going well and the congregation is growing, the real focus is outside the building and on the community.

Oak Grove has been working through a tough question about their role in the local area. "If our church ceased to exist tomorrow, would our community even notice?"

Larson said, "We've been talking about being a light.... Be praying that we could be a light that God's been calling us to be, reaching out to others."

Waco Regional Baptist Association

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