



FROM YOUR MODERATOR

I am glad our church is part of the Waco Regional Baptist Association. Here are a few reasons why:



Community – Churches thrive when they come together with other churches for times of fellowship and service. Recently a team from our church served with members of another WRBA church on a mission trip to South Texas. Now we hope to work together at home to reach more for the Kingdom.

Training – Our association provides a wide variety of training opportunities to benefit our churches. Our church has made some significant changes as a result of participating in these training events.

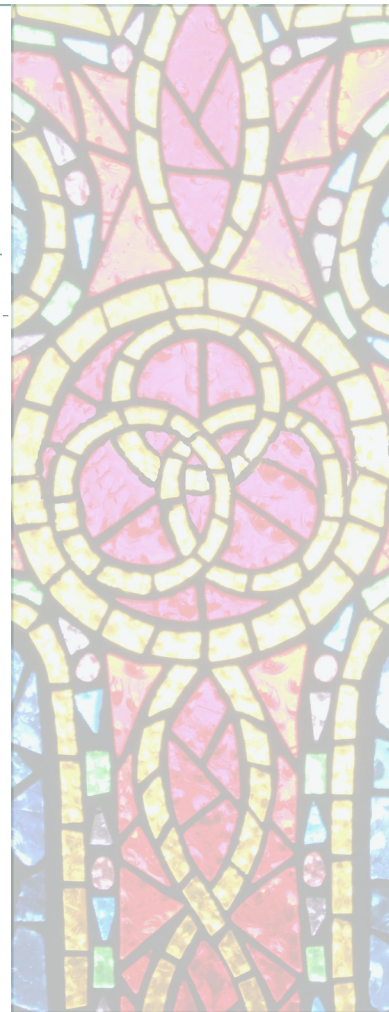
Doing more together - Bible Drill is a great ministry for children. Each year churches in our association come together to plan and staff our yearly WRBA Drill. There are Bible Drill leaders in our association who visit other churches to help them start Bible Drill ministries. Many children participate in Bible Drill because churches work together to provide the opportunity.

Creative solutions – One time we were in need of a financial secretary. I contacted the association, and was connected to an excellent applicant that very day. We hired a wonderful man who was a member of another WRBA church, and he has been a vital part of our staff for nine years!

A bigger vision – When I talk with people from other churches and hear what God is doing in their communities I can see the bigger picture of ministry beyond our church context. This in turn energizes our church for the ministry we have where God has placed us.

It is easy to underestimate the value of churches joining together to work in the association. I encourage you to take a closer look at the WRBA. See how you and your church can become more involved.

Marcy



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HEALTH MINISTRY TEAM UPDATE

This month we want to focus on church health and examine how each person's physical health impacts their faith. The belief is that our spiritual health is intrinsically connected to our physical health. When we take care of our bodies we are likely to care for our spiritual needs, and when we are tending to our spirituality we will likely tend to our physical needs.

A few churches in other states trying to take this call to health seriously, some even have a nurse on their church staff. Going that far may seem outlandish, but studies have shown that 66% of all ER visits could have been prevented by a simple screening that someone like a church nurse or trained volunteer could handle. Most people taken to the ER are either lonely or not caring for their body in simple ways. If WRBA churches take small steps toward tending to the health needs of the congregation and local community, lives will be changed dramatically. Through blood pressure screenings church members who need encouragement to go to the doctor will get critical information to change their mind. Through blood glucose testing community members without resources to see a doctor will get a better picture of their health and find a caring witness in your church. A quick screening at your church will improve the quality of life of your community and make

a connection between taking care of yourself physically and spiritually.

The potential for significant impact through a church health ministry has led Baylor Scott & White to offer us tremendous resources to care for our Waco churches. They have all the blood pressure cuffs and blood sugar tests we need, and may even provide a nurse if you do not have one in the congregation. With the health of our churches and community waning we need to be good stewards of what we have been offered. These tests are readily available, easy to use, and are the perfect entry point for a church considering a health ministry. A church can spiritually and physically save lives at the same time with health screenings after worship.

The long term hope is that something simple like a one-time screening for church members could turn into a church health ministry that encourages healthy living through the life of the church for the glory of God. If this sort of ministry excites you, please contact church-health@wacobaptists.org in the next couple of weeks. We can have a screening set up at your church soon, and the congregation will be healthier for it. Do not miss this opportunity to minister to one another and our community.

Chris Johnson, Chalk Bluff Baptist Church

“So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.”

Psalm 90:12

**January Ministers Round Table
12:00pm on January 11 at Truett Seminary**

**Topic: Understanding the Generations
Speaker: Jon Singletary, Baylor University**

RSVP by **January 4** at admin@wacobaptists.org
or 254-753-2408.

**February Ministers Round Table
12:00pm on February 1 at Truett Seminary**

**Topic: Trends in Discipleship
Speaker: David Pointer**

RSVP by **January 25** at admin@wacobaptists.org
or 254-753-2408.

HUNGER MINISTRY UPDATE

Would your congregation consider a local missions opportunity in 2017? Hunger Ministry at the WRBA is partnering with Texas Hunger Initiative to help increase student participation in summer meals programs in Waco. This coming summer your church has the opportunity to serve for one week with summer missionaries from Go Now Missions to host Bible study/backyard Bible clubs at summer meals sites. If you are interested in this summer missions opportunity would you please contact Craig Nash at 498-7602 to learn more?



Megan Byrd
Hunger Ministry Coordinator
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TEXAS HUNGER INITIATIVE
Baylor University School of Social Work

SUMMER FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM

CHURCH PARTNERS NEEDED

STUDENT MISSIONARIES WILL BE IN WACO DURING THE SUMMER OF 2017, ASSISTING THE TEXAS HUNGER INITIATIVE AND LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN THE SUMMER FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM. WE ARE LOOKING FOR CHURCHES THAT WOULD DEVOTE A WEEK TO PARTNER WITH THESE STUDENTS IN PROGRAMS/VBS/BACKYARD BIBLE CLUBS AT LOCAL PARKS AND COMMUNITY CENTERS THAT SERVE FREE LUNCHESES. THESE STUDENTS WOULD THEN BE AVAILABLE ON A SUNDAY TO SPEAK TO YOUR CONGREGATIONS ABOUT FIGHTING HUNGER IN WACO.

IF YOUR CHURCH IS INTERESTED, EMAIL
CRAIG_NASH@BAYLOR.EDU

JANUARY EVENTS

December 30-January 2
WRBA Office Closed
New Year

January 3-5
Collegiate Leadership Summit
Truett Seminary

January 6
WRBA Office Closed
Staff Retreat

January 11, 12:00pm
Ministers Roundtable
Great Hall, Truett Seminary
Topic: Understanding the Generations
RSVP by January 4

January 16
WRBA Office Closed
Martin Luther King Jr. Day

January 16-17
Preschool and Children's
Ministers Retreat
Salado, TX

January 17, 8:30am
50+ Senior Day
Latham Springs

January 17, 4:00pm
Board Meeting
WRBA, 2911 Herring

January 18, 12:15pm
Networking and Missions
Team Meeting
Waco FBC, Conference Rm

January 29
5th Sunday Hunger Offering

February 1, 12:00pm
Ministers Roundtable
Great Hall, Truett Seminary
Topic: Trends in Discipleship
RSVP by January 25

February 12, 1:00pm
RA Derby Car Races
The Center, Columbus Ave.
Get cars at royalracers.com.
Register with Brad at
254-640-0219.

COMMUNITY NEWS

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

Calvary
Hewitt FBC

**Congrats to Greater
Bible Way and their new
pastor, Wanda Lee!**

NETWORKING & MISSIONS TEAM UPDATE

Excitement was tangible at the last Networking and Missions Ministry Team meeting. The team selected eight families to benefit from a grant obtained to support returning missionaries who accepted the International Mission Board's Voluntary Retirement Incentive this past year.

Emmanuel Baptist Church Pastor Marvin Thompson said, "Many of us on the team were touched by the pathos we felt for VRI personnel impacted negatively by the move back to the US.... Many of our church folk are not aware of how people have been impacted and do not have a way to learn of their needs."

A former missionary, Thompson remembers how retirement plans vary on coverage. Unmet

needs can be financial, emotional or just practical information.

Team Chair Andrew Bowles said, "This grant has helped eight families with immediate needs of housing, transportation, utilities and healthcare. Many of these families are still trying to find employment. We wanted to help them out as best we could during this time of transition."

But not every request was met. Bowles said, "For those we weren't able to assist financially, we set up an 'Adopt a Missionary' program."

This allows church groups to assist in helping missionaries.

If you would like to know more about the "Adopt a Missionary" program, contact the WRBA office at 753-2408.

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