



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.

May 2016



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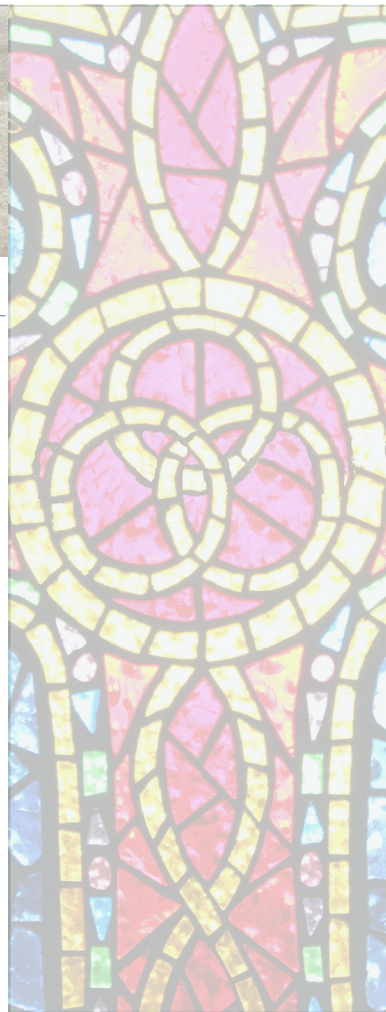
FROM YOUR DIRECTOR

I had an encouraging visit with Dr. Byron Johnson of Baylor's Institute for Studies of Religion (I.S.R.). He shared some of the latest findings from their research into the health of churches today. We are all aware of the wholesale "churches are dying and the gospel is in trouble" headlines that regularly promulgated through common media channels. But there are apparently some much skewed numbers behind such headlines. Although we will have to wait until the fall to have a formal presentation of Baylor I.S.R. research, the broad stroke outline is very clear! The numbers of churches that researchers commonly use to "prove" the state of churches is dire are probably off by more than 40 percent. For example, in McLennan County, the commonly cited number of Christian churches hovers around 300, and many of those are in decline. But the real count of churches is above 500 and many of them have never been documented nor assessed by any research. That is precisely what the Baylor I.S.R. is trying to do now that they have proven their case with three different locations: Waco, Washington State and Virginia. Look for a full presentation of this research this fall.



Anecdotally, I see thriving Baptist Student Ministries on campuses, hundreds of students studying for missions and ministry, and many of our churches thriving. People are being baptized and I regularly hear of families being saved and lives transformed. There is something going on here that the media and headlines are missing entirely. The Baylor I.S.R. is hoping to widen this research to something nation-wide and then publish something of the tremendous positive impact that our churches are collectively making to our communities. How much is all the benevolence, the counseling, the family support, the care of orphans and the elderly, and the huge volunteer base worth from all of these churches? How much impact is the church making on the whole world through missions and ministries? I am very excited to be a part of this, God's global mission to redeem that which was lost through sin and rebellion. I am grateful to serve this organization that regularly helps to extend and embody the Good News of Jesus.

In His Service, Tim



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Baptist Association Emphasis Week (May 15-22) Prayer Points

The WRBA office is here to connect, support and train churches in the ways God has called them to serve. Please join us in praying for the association of churches and what God is doing in Central Texas.

Sunday—Church Health and Protection

Pray for churches as they work to create healthy members (body and soul) and work wisely in our world.

Monday—Hunger Ministry

Pray for church hunger ministries as they offer the community nourishment and the Good News of Jesus.

Tuesday—Collegiate Ministry

Pray for churches as they find ways to serve college students and form long-term relationships.

Wednesday—Restorative Justice/Jail Ministry

Pray for jail ministry volunteers as they preach God's word and for God to free the prisoners' hearts.

Thursday—Missions and Evangelism

Pray for church members as they fearlessly spread God's word locally and on mission trips.

Friday—Church Staff

Pray for church staff members as they minister to others. Pray for their healthy, wisdom and endurance.

Saturday—Church Strengthening

Pray for unity among out churches as they seek God's direction in ministry to the community.

"How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity."

Psalm 133:1

UPCOMING EVENTS



Your Church's Missional Toolbox A Mission Resource Meeting

6:00pm on Tuesday, May 17
Waco FBC, Fellowship Hall

Featuring: Steve Seaberry, BGCT

BGCT and WRBA offer a free meal and information on mission trip resources.

Reservations required by May 13.

Contact WRBA at 254-753-2408 or

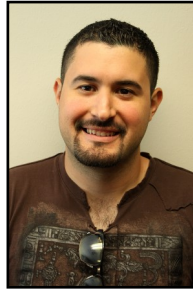
admin@wacobaptists.org for

reservations and more information.



MCC COLLEGIATE MINISTRY SPOTLIGHT

God has been doing many incredible things in the McLennan Community College Campus. We have around 25 students coming every week to our free lunches, sponsored by local churches. During those lunches we have shared the love of Christ by not only providing physical food but by sharing the Bread of Life through devotionals and guided spiritual conversations. We have also started a student leaders group which is composed of nine students that want to serve God and share His word. This last week the student leaders organized an outreach for the Highlander Games and were able to connect with more than 20 students who were interested in joining us this next semester. We have begun planning events similar to these throughout the following semester in order to connect with more students and grow a richer Christian community on campus to shine the light of Christ. If you or your church would like to get involved this next school year, contact me at mcc@wacobaptists.org. If you know any seniors that are about to graduate high school or college students that are not connected to a college ministry let them know about www.texasfreshman.com where they can connect to a college ministry on their campus.



Stephen Galarza
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WRBA has helped several local churches partner with MCC students and start a BSM. Above: One student welcomes others to the BSM table at the Highlander Games. Bottom left: BSM students pose with new game boards. Bottom right: MCC students play with full-sized Jenga set.



MAY EVENTS

May 4, 12:00pm
Ministers Roundtable
Truett Seminary
Topic: Church Evangelism

May 5, 12:00pm
National Day of Prayer
First Methodist Church, Waco

May 8
Mother's Day

May 8
Mother's Day Offering for
BGCT World Hunger

May 9, 3:30pm
Church Evangelism
Ministry Team Meeting
WRBA

May 12, 12:00pm
Networking & Missions
Team Meeting
Waco FBC, Conference Rm

May 15-22
Baptist Association
Emphasis Week

May 16-21
Bike Out Hunger
Fredericksburg—Dallas

May 17, 6:00pm
Your Church's Missional
Toolbox Roundtable
Waco FBC, Fellowship Hall

May 27, 11:30am
Health Ministry Team
Meeting
WRBA

May 29
5th Sunday BGCT Hunger
Offering

May 30
WRBA Office Closed
Memorial Day

June 6-7
Coaching Clinic
WRBA

COMMUNITY NEWS

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

Downsville
Lorena FBC
Old Time
Primera Iglesia
Robinson FBC

New Church Staff:

Congratulations to Marlin
MBC and their new pastor,
Vincent Hartsfield!

SOUNDBOARD TRAINING

On April 23, about 30 people gathered in the Calvary Baptist Church sanctuary balcony for a soundboard training session. WRBA wants to support lay leaders as well as church staff.

“We wanted to equip church volunteers to do a great job running the soundboard in their church. Sound is so important to worship and teaching, and it is one of those positions that we seldom think about actually equipping for effectiveness,”

said Director Tim Randolph. Wayne Casey, of Emmanuel Baptist Church, got “a little bit better of an understanding of the sound system, even though I’ve been operating one for years.”

John Clawson, of Clawson AV, and Daren Moore led the discussions around the church soundboard. They started with a basic overview and then moved to more advanced material.

He even tried a few new things during the next day’s service.

Waco Regional Baptist Association

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