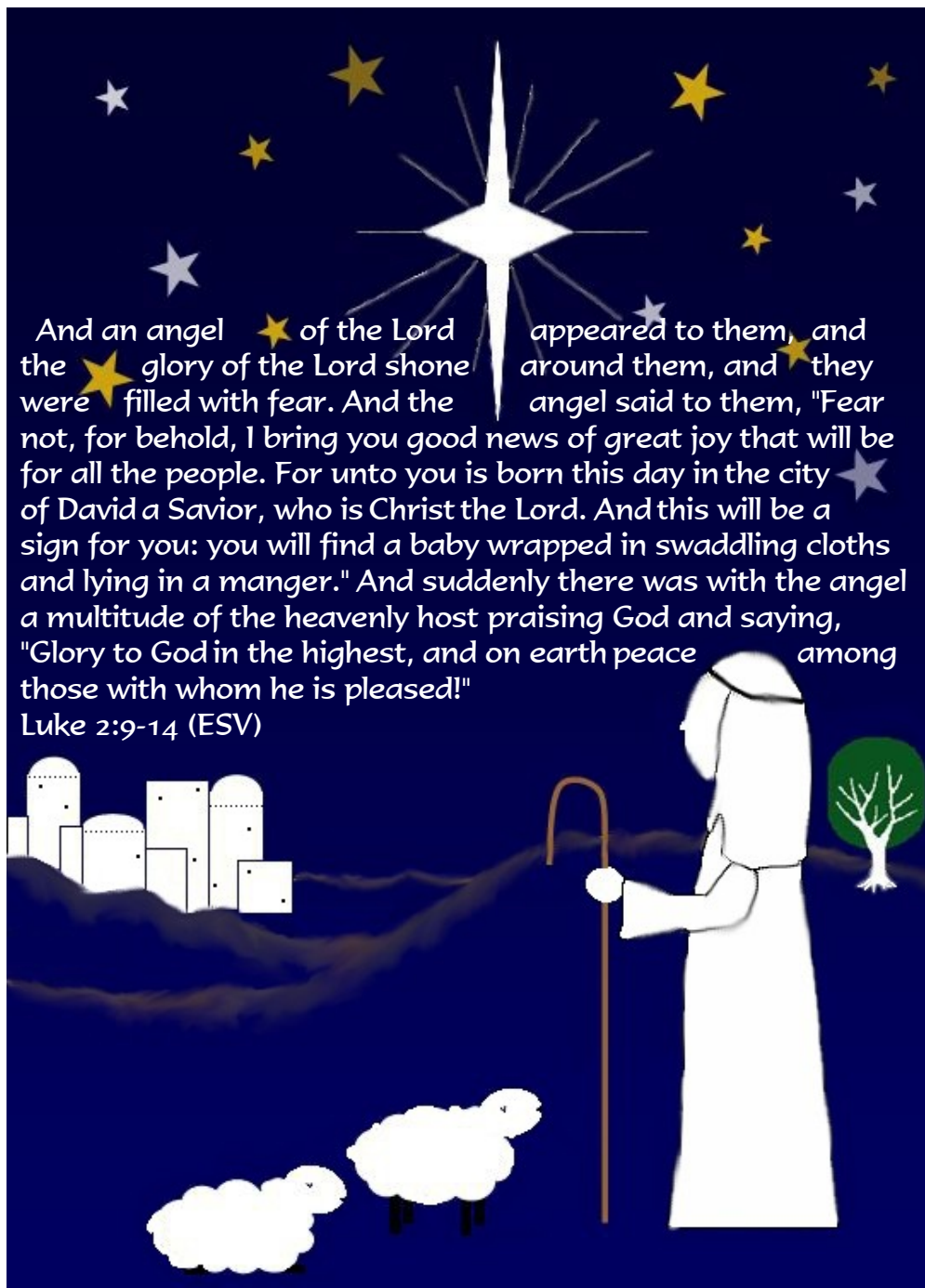




WACO REGIONAL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION Family News



May God bless you and fill you with His joy. Merry Christmas!

Tim

Dane

Edna

Katelyn

Jon

Jenny

Patrick



FROM YOUR DIRECTOR



It is easy to underestimate the power of the narratives that we believe and tell ourselves. What I am referring to are the big picture narratives that we use to explain our lives, our universe, our past and our future. These stories encapsulate our hopes or lack thereof, and our understanding of our destiny. The world is filling the ears and minds of the people all through our communities with alternative stories about the nature of life and the direction of history.

There are the newly dressed up pantheists who find gods and spirit forces in all of nature. There are the materialists who are explaining everything through chemistry and physics and they insist there is nothing else. The influence of the Hindu and Buddhist stories is seen and heard through bookstores and television shows.

But the Christian story stands in stark contrast to all of these in its simplicity, its transforming power and its eternal truthfulness. I Corinthians 15:3-4 summarize this narrative: “that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.” This story is the one we remember and retell starting at Christmas and then concluding at Easter through plays, special ceremonies, dinners and sermons. This is the heart of the Good News! The holidays provide us with abundant opportunities to remind one another and our loved ones and our neighbors to tell this story one more time. Because in **this** story is our reason to live, our hope for the future and our compass for life’s entire journey. May God through the Holy Spirit fill your heart and soul and mind with joy and peace and hope as you share the story of God’s remarkable, indescribable love.

-Tim



Community News



Continue to pray for WRBA churches seeking a Pastor:

Columbus Avenue, Emmanuel, FBC Riesel, Highland, Hilltop, Shiloh,
West Robinson, Western Heights, Westwood

Congratulations to Seventh and James and their new Administrative Assistant
Kameron Barker!



Online Community



To receive this newsletter only by email, contact Katelyn at 753-2408
or admin@wacoregionalbaptistassociation.org.

Find information on Twitter, Facebook and YouTube.

The Power of Partnership

Christmas offers a grand opportunity to revisit the most important things in life, including the purpose of life itself. Although I'm familiar with the way the Westminster Shorter Catechism begins: "The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever," and would never dispute that declaration, I feel it halts short of depicting the fullest design of human existence. This thought struck me while praying to conclude worship one Sunday morning this past year at Shekinah Glory Baptist Church. I prayed for each of us to serve moment by moment as reflections of grace. This, to me, adds the horizontal dimension to the vertical expressed in "glorifying God and enjoying Him." If the root meaning of "glory" is heaviness, perhaps the weightiest way I glorify God is in reflecting His grace to others—grace received and extended. Is not this the clearest imitation of Christ? Could anything more significantly honor God than by acting like Him in relation to all others? The more clearly we reflect grace, the more we resemble our God of grace and mercy. As Saint Francis prayed:



"Lord, make me an instrument of Your peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy.

O, Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love; For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; it is in dying that we are born again to eternal life."

I would add, "Father, enable me to genuinely reflect Your grace."

May you and your family experience renewal and holy refreshment this Christmas season.

In Him,
Dane, Associate Director

Ministry Opportunity

Is your church or small group interested in sponsoring a Christmas party for one of the dorms at Mart TYC (Texas Youth Commission Home)?

If yes, please contact Katherine Davis at katherine.davis@tyc.state.tx.us.

This would help make Christmas a special time for the youth.

Merry Christmas! 



— The Body of Believers —



A glimpse of how God is at work in the Waco area.

Some churches support global missions, some focus on local efforts. A few give time, others give money. Lake Shore Baptist Church does each.

"...As a church, it was hard to not find new ways of connecting in the community continually," said Pastor Dorisanne Cooper.

Lake Shore supports multiple missions throughout the community as well as globally. How? Groups of three or more people with similar callings to a ministry will make a covenant with each other to work together with their purpose. Once a month, representatives of each group meet around a table to discuss what is happening in each mission. Cooper encourages all ages to be active in ministry, whether raising money, serving or gardening.

She said, "We've always tended to have a lot of different missions going on and have realized that that's sort of our strength. It doesn't mean that we have the whole congregation working in one particular place, but just about everybody in the congregation has some kind of involvement in missions."

This past September the church gathered representatives from each of the organizations the church supports for "A Place at the Table." Each decorated and talked at a table in the church. This helped other congregation members see what God was and is doing in the area as well as to recognize each of the ministries and offer thanks. There were about 40 organizations represented.

Lynn Williams, whose parents helped found the church, said, "Lake Shore has changed over the years but it also has a great deal of continuity. Many of the founding members are still active in services and missions."

Williams left during her college years but felt at home when she returned.

"At one of the anniversaries a member, Penny Edens, wrote a song called the "Church that Love Built," and it typifies Lake Shore in my mind. I always feel loved at Lake Shore."

One change is that there is a senior group. Many are founding members.

Associate Pastor Sharlande Sledge said, "We have really depended on that generation for so many things. And when they slow down, it's difficult for us. You can't replace anybody exactly, but you can try to learn from them.... It's one of my dreams ... for there to be a good sense of younger generations learning from the older generations."

Many in the members have seminary or social work degrees. This often means the teens enter youth group ready for theological debates and work.

Minister to Youth Charles Conkin said, "I'm not going to solve every theological problem that they have or that they're going to have in life, but just to build them with a solid foundation..."

The group still does a bit of mission work together. The Juniors and Seniors also have what they call "Pilgrimage".

Conkin said, "...we'll get together, discuss some topics, read some books, and then plan a trip to go somewhere. Last time I took a group to Philadelphia. We learned about some different communities up there, some different ministries in Philadelphia and what they were doing and what they were trying to accomplish."

Cooper asked for prayer "that we'd continue to find strength and security and comfort and purpose in our communal walk with God. And that we would continue to know what voices that we need to bring to the conversations. Different churches do have a different voice to share in the community conversation. It'd be pretty boring if all did the exact same thing, just on separate corners."

For more information about the church, visit www.lakeshorewaco.org.



Upcoming Events



Networking and Missions Breakfast

7:30-8:30am, December 1

FBC Waco Parlor

This is an opportunity to meet leaders of mission projects, see photos, ask questions and take away enough information to prayerfully consider joining one of the missions.

The projects range from just outside of the county to South America to Africa.



Christian Women's Job Corps
"Hands of Hope"
Mentoring Educating Encouraging

***The 18th graduating class of
 Christian Women's Job Corps
 invites you to share in our graduation.***

7:00 p.m., December 8, 2011
Truett Seminary Chapel
Reception following

Christmas Performances

<u>Church</u>	<u>Date and Time</u>
Meadowbrook (Musical)	Dec. 10 at 7:00pm, and Dec. 11 at 8:30/10:45am
FBC Woodway (Missions Gift)	Dec. 11 at 9:00/10:15am
Lake Shore (Music)	Dec. 11 at 10:45am
Chalk Bluff (Music)	Dec. 11 at 6:00pm
Seventh and James (Music)	Dec. 11 at 6:00pm
Columbus Avenue (Musical)	Dec. 11 at 6:30pm
FBC Hewitt (Musical)	Dec. 18 at 10:40am
FBC McGregor (Musical)	Dec. 18 at 10:45am
Downsville (Play)	Dec. 18 at 11:00am
Columbus Avenue (Music)	Dec. 21 at 6:30pm



Other December Events



Thursday, December 1, 7:30-8:30am — Missions Breakfast for Networking and Missions. FBC Waco Parlor.

Thursday, December 1, 4:00pm — Missions Development Team Meeting. WRBA.

December 4-11 — Week of Prayer—International Missions and Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. National Goal: \$175 million.

December 23-26 — WRBA Office Closed. Christmas.

December 30 — WRBA Office Closed. New Year's.