



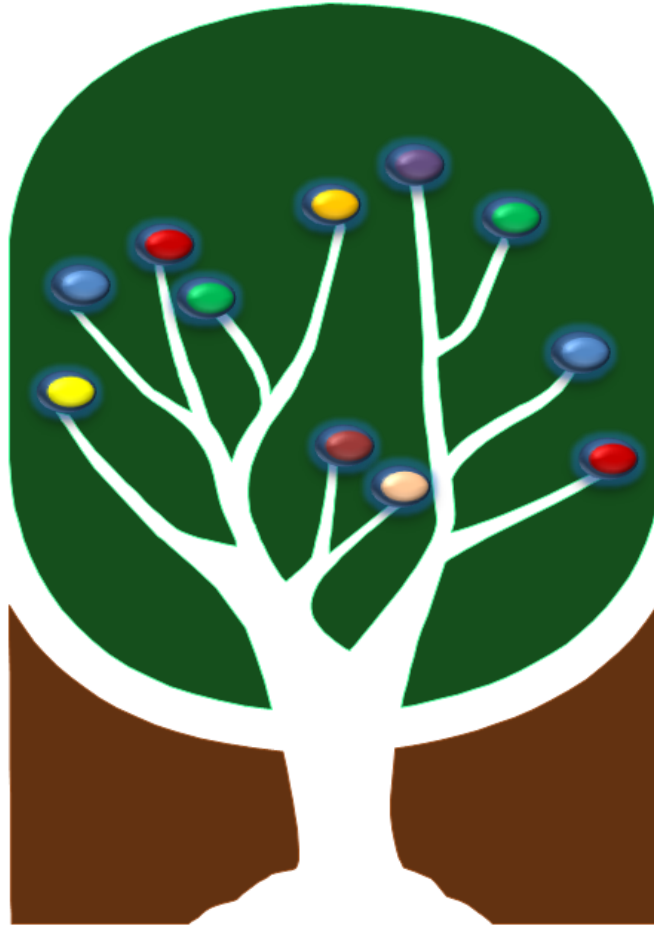
WACO REGIONAL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

Family News

Vol. 11

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Have a Blessed
Christmas !!
from the Staff of
the WRBA

Tim

Edna

Dave

Carol



As I read the book of Acts, I am continually surprised at how the body of Christ moved, made decisions, extended the gospel, and changed the world. These narratives reveal a living movement that included conflicts, threats, tragedies, and even divisions. In fact, the narrative flows straight through history to the present time. In spite of those difficulties, churches have continued praying, teaching, proclaiming, ministering, and making disciples. All of this goes on in spite of persecutions, missteps, immature leaders, and struggles of every kind. This perspective helps me interpret Jesus' words in the Gospels, "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand!" He announced its beginning, and we are living in its wake.

Sometimes with the noise and business of life, work, news, and technology, we lose that sense of connection to history and to what God is currently doing right in our very midst! That famous announcement of the angel, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people..." was a proclamation of an unchangeable truth. Jesus has come and his Kingdom is following him.

Perhaps during this Christmas season, we can pause and reflect on just how good that news is, and how wonderful it is that He is still spreading it "for all the people." We can thank God for the privilege of being a small part of that movement he started so long ago. It is really a cause to rejoice.

In His Service,
Tim

WORLD CHANGERS 2011



World Changers is again coming to Waco. The week will be July 18-23. Last year was a big success and we expect the same this year. I will begin to send out letters in Jan/Feb. about how you can be involved. Whether you were able to be involved last year or not, here is a chance to be involved this year.

There is one immediate need that I have right now. We are looking for a lodging facility to host the World Changers project. This is usually in a local middle or high school. If you would be willing to pass along any contact information or know of someone who has contact information for the local schools, it would be much appreciated. I can contact them. I just need their information. You can let me know by calling me (417) 631-8717 or by e-mailing me mchriste91@gmail.com. I would like to have the lodging facility taken care of by the middle of January. I look forward to serving alongside you for the 2011 World Changers Project.

Grace and Peace,
Brian Miller
Associational Coordinator for the Waco
World Changers Project



Baylor's 2011 Doctrinal Conference & WRBA January Pastors' Conference

Baylor University invites you to participate in the **2011 Doctrinal Conference**, an annual continuing education event for ministers sponsored by the Department of Religion through its Ministry Guidance program. The Conference is set for **Wednesday, January 12, 2011**. Dr. James Denison, founding president of the Center for Informed Faith and former pastor of Park Cities Baptist Church in Dallas, will address the topic of the church as it relates to missions in the 21st century. More specifically, Dr. Denison will be examining the spiritual awakening that is occurring around the world today and how our churches can become involved. His presentation will prove to be both informative and practical in its focus. For this particular conference, we will be providing a copy of Dr. Denison's work on the topic: "The Fifth Great Awakening."

Dr. Denison is highly qualified to lead us in the exploration of this subject. In addition to being the president of the Center for Informed Faith, he serves as Theologian in Residence for the Baptist General Convention of Texas. He has taught Ph.D. seminars and graduate level classes for Dallas Baptist University and served as a teaching fellow for the B. H. Carroll Theological Institute. Dr. Denison has also taught at Mercer University School of Theology and has served on the boards of Dallas Baptist University, Truett Theological Seminary, and the Center for Christian Ethics at Baylor University. He has written five books and done extensive work in apologetics, philosophy, and cultural studies. His daily devotional, "God Issues: Today's News in Spiritual Perspective," has more than 18,000 readers.



Registration will be at 9:45 a.m. at Truett Seminary in room 107 where the conference will be held, beginning at 10:00 a.m. Coffee, soft drinks, and water will be provided. At 11:45 a.m., we will adjourn for lunch in **conjunction with the Waco Regional Baptist Association's monthly Pastors' Conference in the Piper Great Hall**. Dr. Denison will also be the featured speaker at the luncheon. There is no fee for the conference or the lunch, but there is limited space. To ensure a place at the conference and luncheon, we ask that you make your **reservation prior to Thursday, January 6, by emailing Loine_Adams@baylor.edu** so that adequate preparations can be made for your attendance. If you prefer, you may make your reservation by telephone at 254-710-3739.

Should you need further information, please do not hesitate to contact us. We look forward to seeing you on Wednesday, **January 12**.

Dennis J. Horton
Associate Director of Ministry Guidance
Coordinator, Continuing Education for Ministers



WELCOME

Welcome New Church Staff Members
in our Association

Brady Herbert
Teaching Pastor

Harris Creek
bherbert@harriscreek.org

Britany Lewis
Youth Minister

FBC McGregor
Britany.Lewis@yahoo.com

Hermes Soto
Pastor

El Calvario
hermessoto@yahoo.com

Continue to Pray for WRBA Pastorless Churches

Oak Grove, Seventh and James, Emmanuel, FBC McGregor, Third Street



Last month we introduced a term that may still be largely unfamiliar to many. The term is “restorative justice” and we are using it to address the larger issues related to crime in our communities. Restorative Justice emphasizes ministry to all those in the criminal justice system: offenders and their families; victims and their families; law enforcement and their families; correctional facility staff; court employees; and others. The goal is to prevent and repair the harm crime does in our communities. Certainly, churches should take the lead in reducing crime and its effect rather than leaving the problem to the government alone. We are the ones with the only permanent solution to this enormous problem in society.

A significant way in which the churches of WRBA are currently reaching out to offenders is by sending volunteers into the McLennan County Jail each week as part of the Jail Ministry of McLennan County. This ministry was started several years ago and continues on a weekly basis year round as volunteers enter the jail to share the hope found in Christ to jail inmates. On any given Sunday afternoon, volunteers share the love of Christ with more than 900 inmates, male and female, and many inmates experience the transforming power of Jesus Christ. Last Sunday, one inmate by the name of Marcus showed a volunteer that he had underlined and memorized 2 Corinthians 5:17 in response to the encouragement of a volunteer the week before. Marcus then prayed to receive Jesus Christ as Lord.

As you can imagine, it takes a lot of volunteers to effectively reach out to more than 900 inmates on a weekly basis, and we are in need of more committed individuals to join our ranks of jail ministry volunteers. If your church or any group within your church would be willing to have someone come and speak about the challenge and opportunities related to jail ministry, please contact me and I will gladly schedule either myself or one of our volunteers to come and share the ministry with you. Our goal is to add twenty new volunteers within the first quarter of 2011. I look forward to hearing from you and sharing with you how you may be involved in this critical ministry.

Dr. Dane Fowlkes
Associate Director

HUNGER MINISTRY SURVEY

The Community Ministries Team Task Force on Hunger will be conducting a church survey association wide beginning in the middle of January. This survey is designed to give us a proper overview of how Waco Regional Baptist Association churches are addressing hunger in our community. A volunteer representing the task force will be contacting your church with the following questions:

1. What is your congregation doing in terms of hunger alleviation for the city of Waco/your neighborhood (pantry, weekly meal, Meals on Wheels?)
2. When are these services available? How often can someone receive these services?
3. Who is the contact for these services at your congregation?
4. Do you have congregants who are proficient in Spanish writing and/or speaking who would be willing to (or already are) offer their skills?
5. Would you be interested in learning what other congregations are doing?
6. What is your church doing in terms of helping people get through the process of applying for federal programs or referring people to federal programs?

We want to thank you in advance for your help in accomplishing this task, and please pray for us as we strive to put together a proper plan for our Association in regards to this important issue, loving our neighbors as ourselves.

Amos Humphries, Senior Pastor
Park Lake Drive Baptist Church
Hunger Ministry Task Force Facilitator



And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed.

²And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.

³And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.

⁴And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; because he was of the house and lineage of David:

⁵To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

⁶And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.

⁷And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

⁸And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

⁹And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

¹⁰And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

¹¹For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

¹²And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

¹⁴Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

¹⁵And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

¹⁶And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

¹⁷And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.

¹⁸And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

¹⁹But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.

²⁰And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.