



WACO REGIONAL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

Family News

FROM YOUR DIRECTOR

There is a disturbing war going on right under our noses and around our neighborhoods that we hear very little of inside of our churches. I am referring to the war on drugs. During this past week, the following bits of data came to my attention regarding this scourge:

- A major meth lab was operating across the street from one of our churches. The pastor found out about it from one of the policemen after the lab had been raided.
- In the past five years, 48,000 people have been murdered in Mexico in drug-related violence according to the Mexican government. Many speculate that the actual number is far higher.
- Pastors and churches in Mexico are threatened with violence if they try in any way to influence the people in this conflict. The churches are regularly extorted for monthly cash payments from the Zetas (cartels). I have heard of churches in Monclova, Juarez and Tepic, Mexico that have had to curtail mission trips and to tell partner churches in the U.S. not to come because of fear of the cartels and the terrorists.
- One of our pastors was harassed and threatened by the Zetas while on a mission trip to Mexico while travelling to preach the Word of God and encourage the brothers.
- Every year in the United States, 22,000 people die of drug overdoses according to the U.S. Center for Disease Control.

So, you might ask, what does this have to do with our churches in the WRBA? This whole system of violence starts with the teenager or the young adult who thinks they aren't hurting anyone when they consume just a "little" of these illicit drugs. In reality, everyone who partakes of these drugs has the blood of all of these victims on their hands. Churches can speak. We can educate our youth. We can organize prayer walks in our neighborhoods. We can be a part of the solution in our part of the community. We can be salt and light.

Thanks for allowing me to serve and to challenge you.

Tim

— From Your Associate Director —

Many think of ministry as the work done by pastors, missionaries, Christian conference speakers, or evangelists. Rarely do we think of work done by business persons, students, lawyers, engineers, or homemakers as ministers. We typically believe that those who get their paychecks from a church or other Christian organization are the ones who “do” ministry, while the rest of us are those to whom ministry is “done.” Hopefully, we are expanding our vision of ministry so that we view all we do, regardless of our occupation, as what it can and ought to be—ministry that glorifies God and influences other people.



Although it's been around a long time, the idea that service to God should have only to do with a church altar, singing, preaching, teaching, sacrifice and the like has been, and continues to be, damaging in our world. The Greek word in the New Testament that is often translated as “ministry” is diakonia, and it carries with it the basic meaning of “service.” It can refer to tasks as basic as waiting tables (Acts 6:1), caring for the poor through monetary gifts (2 Corinthians 9:12), or proclaiming the gospel (Acts 20:24). The term is not limited to the service of a select few appointed to particular offices within the church; in fact, the exact opposite is the case.

Ministry in our communities is the privilege and responsibility of each of us. Praise God that he offers every believer opportunities to serve in the name and character of Christ. Thank you for allowing us to serve alongside you.

In Him,

Dane Fowlkes

Associate Director

———— Missions Opportunity ————

World Changers

This summer World Changers will be back in Waco. Here is a chance for your church to reach out and impact Waco for Christ. Towards the beginning of February, each church will receive a letter in the mail detailing how each church can be involved in this outreach opportunity.

Dates for World Changers in South Waco area: July 16-July 21.

———— Online Community ————

Each week we send additional information by email. To sign up for these weekly emails, register on the WRBA website or contact Katelyn at admin@wacoregionalbaptistassociation.org.



Find information on Twitter, Facebook and YouTube.

The Body of Believers

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

The most common word used to describe Calvary Baptist Church has been "intentional." From the worship service to the ministries and life groups, members of the congregation have noticed the planned focus of each effort.

Member Kay Dunlap said she has been at the church for more than five years because of "the intentionality of the members to form community and the outstanding worship experiences."

This was displayed to her from the beginning of her time at Calvary.

"When I first joined, I was recovering from cancer treatments. I was bald and looked like I was a survivor of a Nazi prison camp. I was greeted with love and acceptance," Dunlap said. "I attended a Sunday School class that included women with cognitive difficulties from a group home, seminary students and Baylor professors, and a homeless man who had just wandered in off the street. And it worked. I have been a part of many churches that wanted that kind of diversity, but could not figure out how to make that happen. At Calvary, it happens."

Another common factor of the members could be the feeling of belonging.

Jim Coston said, "It's a great church; I was called to Calvary and have had that call affirmed regularly since."

Two-year member Walker Moore said it was "a church where people are really trying to live out a life of following Jesus."

Moore also appreciated Calvary for trying to do that in missional living.

"It's really trying to reach out into the neighborhood and be a neighborhood church," he said.

Among other things, Moore is a part of Project Hope, a collaborative program between West Avenue Elementary and the church. He works "with the church and the school to find ways that would be meaningful for the church to interact with the children."

This is only one way the church reaches its neighborhood.

Coston said, "We are willing to venture out for the Kingdom. This includes engagement with one another through small groups and Sunday school. It also encompasses our work in the local and global community. Some of these inspired endeavors work wonderfully and enrich lives. Other times we go back to the drawing board. This continually renewed willingness to risk for God keeps me excited."

With a focus on many local missions, Calvary Baptist Church has begun to look at global missions. Last year, the church went to China and Lebanon.

Publications Coordinator and global missions life group leader Jennifer Whitlark said, "The first trip is always the hardest.... Now that the first trip is started and the ground work is laid, it's easier to come back year after year."

One of the seven people who went to Lebanon came back and, with his wife, applied to work at a Lebanese orphanage. They were accepted and are now raising support before moving there for three years.

Whitlark gave many examples of how the church is pulling together. Each newsletter includes an article by a staff member and another by somebody who is not on staff, with an occasional feature highlighting a senior member.

The church is also starting a coed softball team of varying ages.

"Any time you can get people from different age groups to get together to do something, it's always beneficial," Whitlark said.

Coston said the church was growing and "growing pains are inevitable."

"We covet prayers for God's Spirit to grow and develop," he said.

For more information, visit www.calvarybaptistwaco.com.

Upcoming Events

Bible Drill

The Bible Drill Council (representatives from each participating church) will meet at Columbus Avenue Baptist Church at 6:00pm on February 13 to plan the Association Drill. Please RSVP about attending the meeting by February 8. Contact Marcy Smith at 776-2524 or Julie Hammer at 752-1655, ext. 219 to discuss your Bible Drill program.



Western Heights will have a free showing of the movie Courageous on February 12 at 5:30 in the Fellowship Hall. Everyone is invited. Free popcorn, drinks and kid-friendly alternative movie will be provided. Contact Marcy Smith at marcy@whbcwaco.org for information.

The Kyle Lake Center for Effective Preaching

The Winter Pastors' School at Truett Seminar on February 16-18 features Dr. Terence Fretheim, Dr. David Garland and Kyle Matthews. Registration closes on February 13 at 5:00pm. For more details, go to http://www.baylor.edu/truett/index.php?id=83722&r=l_nav.

Pray for FBC Crawford's youth and their D-Now weekend, Feb. 17-19.

Children's Ministry Day February 18, 2012 - Statewide

Be a part of Children's Ministry Day. Help your church's 1st-6th graders be the love of Christ in your community. This year's theme is Operation

Education. Children have the opportunity to give back to their schools, teachers and administration through Children's Ministry Day. For more information and ideas contact Liz Encinia at elizabeth.enciaia@texasbaptists.org or 214-828-5158.



4XFour Clinic Waco

First Baptist Church, Woodway

10:00am-2:00pm on February 22, 2012

Cost is \$15 (includes lunch and materials). Greg Wallace will lead the 4xFour Clinic and discuss a proven method for reaching others for Christ. Learn to Identify, Intercede, Invest and Invite people around you.

Contact www.texasbaptists.org/register or 214-828-5121 for information.

March Pastors' Conferences

12:00 noon on March 7

Truett Seminary

\$7.00 for the meal

Speaker: Hal Ritter

Please make a reservation by March 1.

Contact Katelyn at admin@wacoregionalbaptistassociation.org or 753-2408.

-OR- Pre-pay at www.wacoregionalbaptistassociation.org.

Other February Events

(True Love Waits Emphasis Month)

Wednesday, February 1, 12:00pm — Pastors' Conference. Truett.

February 2-3 — [un]Apologetic Conference. San Antonio.

February 10-11 — Union Feminil Misionera Prayer Retreat. Houston.

February 13-19 — Focus on WMU.

Thursday, February 16, 11:30am — Retired Ministers and Missionaries Fellowship.
FBC Waco.

Saturday, February 18 — Children's Ministry Day

Sunday, February 19, 2:00pm — Associational RA Pinewood Derby. Columbus Avenue.

Tuesday, February 21, 4:00pm — Administrative Team Meeting. HBMC.

Wednesday, February 22, 10:00am-2:00pm — Engage Evangelism Conference (4xFour).
FBC Woodway.

Thursday, February 23, 4:00pm — Networking & Missions Team Meeting. FBC Waco

Wednesday, February 29 — CWJC/CMJC Day of Prayer.

Community News

Continue to pray for WRBA churches seeking a Pastor:

Beverly Hills, Columbus Avenue, Emmanuel, FBC Riesel, Hilltop, Shiloh, Westwood

Congratulations to Highland and their new bookkeeper, Karen Harper!

Hunger Ministry Spotlight

Christmas is behind us and Easter is only a few short months away! My question is though, how do we transition from the joy and excitement of our Savior's birth to the complicated emotions of Easter? To experience Easter, we must first experience the sorrow and tears of our Savior's death so that on the third day we can smile and celebrate his resurrection. We cannot have one without the other, but it can be hard to transition from one to another. One way to prepare our hearts and minds for this mixture of emotions is through the process of Lent. Lent is the season before Easter that prepares us to fully experience all the Easter season has to teach us. It's a time to reflect and think about our Savior and his gift of life he gives us because he loves us so much.

A helpful guide for both the new and old to the Lenten Season is curriculum for Lent and Eastertide (the seven weeks between Easter and Pentecost), developed by Seeds of Hope Publishers, who are based here in Waco at Seventh and James Baptist Church. The curriculum is for individuals or churches to use as a method to engage in thoughtful reflection during the Lenten season and to help keep the congregation engaged after Easter as well. This year's guide is titled "Glimpses of Grace" and will be organized around Matthew 11:1-6. If you would like to know more information about Seeds of Hope's Lent/Eastertide guides, visit their website (www.seedspublishers.org/) or email Katie Cook at seedseditor@clearwire.net.

-Jenny Hodge