



WACO REGIONAL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

Family News

———— FROM YOUR DIRECTOR ————

In a past issue of Christianity Today, I found an article about the value of a church to a community. Ram Cnaan, a researcher from the University of Pennsylvania, identified the services and products that most American churches provide and then calculated a dollar amount based on his research to identify the cash value that a thriving, ministering church adds to its community. Some of the services and products that he highlighted are: divorces prevented (\$22,500 at \$900 per couple); getting people off drugs and alcohol (\$78,750); crime and prevention re-entry (\$84,000); Building enhancements/capital campaign (\$60,000); helping people gain employment (\$725,000); trees (\$523); Garden/lawn/cemetery (\$146); K–12 Schools (\$3,489,926) plus 80% of the church budget which is direct stimulus to the local economy. By his calculations, an average urban church is worth approximately \$476,663.24 annually to the local community. You can see more of his calculations and methods at www.christianitytoday.com and search for “church economic worth”.

It is easy to bash churches when they don’t meet some particular individual’s expectations. In fact, it is fairly easy to find a fault with every church – if you look very long. But Jesus loves the church. He doesn’t just love the *perfect church* because such a church never existed. Ephesians 5:25 says “**...Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her...**” The next time you drive into the parking lot of your church, maybe you can see it with different eyes. Here is a flawed organization comprised of all kinds of people, but nevertheless, that is precious to God Himself and invaluable to the community around it.

That is why I am thrilled to be a part of 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.” (That is our mission statement.)

Tim

— Transforming Communities —

The WRBA Executive Board approved at its April meeting the strategic plan presented by the Community Ministries Team (in order to read the full plan, please go to: <http://www.wacoregionalbaptistassociation.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/2011-Community-Ministries-Strategic-Planning-Documents.pdf>). This plan is an ambitious transition of our approach to community ministries in keeping with the mission statement of WRBA that declares our identity as a network of churches. This new direction in community ministry shifts the focus back to the local church. In other words, community ministries of the Waco Regional Baptist Association serves to enhance the ministries of our churches in their respective communities. This paradigm shift is currently grouped into three categories of ministry as they relate to the ministries of our churches: hunger ministry, collegiate ministry, and restorative justice. Each of these areas will have coordinators who will be responsible for assisting churches in their particular expression of community ministry. Our Community Ministries Team is ready to post job descriptions for three of these coordinator positions. You may access the job descriptions by going to the following link: <http://www.wacoregionalbaptistassociation.org/positions-available/positions-with-wrba/>. We encourage submissions from any interested persons for these important roles. The Community Ministries Team hopes to fill these positions as soon as possible, so we would ask for your help in distributing this information in your church. Perhaps you would be willing to post the job descriptions in a prominent place. Hopefully, we will be able to share the results of this search in the near future.



In Him,
Dane Fowlkes, Ph.D.
Associate Director
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———— The Body of Believers ————

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

In June, many Waco citizens will observe the anniversary of its oldest African-American congregation. New Hope Baptist Church is celebrating its 145-year-old history. The 18 founding members went to FBC Waco until they formed a congregation in 1866.

A member since birth, Doris J. King described the plans for the 3:30 p.m. commemorative celebration on the second Sunday in June.

"We've gone all out this year. We've sent letters to many former members of New Hope Baptist Church.... We will have a local minister, Rev. Melvin Petty who is the pastor of Greater Mt. Olive Baptist Church, to be our guest."

After a dwindling membership, the church is seeing a rise in interest and activity. This anniversary means a lot to the members and new pastor.

Rev. Dr. Richard L. Blanton said, "The 145 years means to me ... stability, that this church has withstood the tests of time. That is a testament to this community about the value of the church, the value of Christ, the stability in their life, a rock in their community. There are more metaphors, but this should say that there is something solid about New Hope."

Blanton was well received by the congregation. Deacon and former Choir Director Robert M. King said the final vote for Blanton was 95.5 percent in favor. The formal installation service for Blanton will take place on Aug. 20, 2011 with guest speaker Rev. Delvin Atchison of Antioch Baptist Church.

Mr. King said, "We are the recipients of a blessing from God with His placement of Richard L. Blanton as our pastor. The man is a leader ... one that will work with all types of individuals."

King used the metaphor of a chain only being as strong as its weakest link to describe the gumption of New Hope.

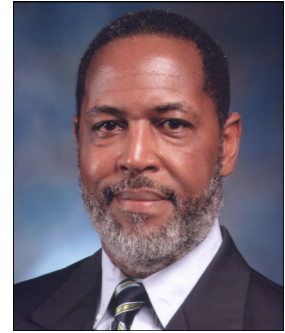
"Each one of us is a link, and we will hold on to each other as brother and sister for the cause of Christ."

The church has a strong women's ministry and an annual food drive for Caritas. June 20-24 they are holding the first VBS in many years with hopes for many participants and an invitation to everyone to join the picnic after VBS. The church recently performed the play "Shout Hallelujah", is reinstating the Brotherhood program, is planning for a spiritual gifts assessment survey and has a long-range plan for a Social Services Director.

Blanton said, "I want to comment on one characterization. We are black only in the sense of culture or tradition. We are open to everyone. In fact, we are integrated.... We are unapologetically steeped in black tradition, culturally speaking. Just like I would feel the same at First Baptist downtown. They would not change their tradition because of me, but I'm welcome there and I feel welcome wherever I go. This tradition is cherished."

He listed a few things fellow believers can pray for.

"Pray for spiritual energy.... Pray for realization of spiritual gifts and talents. Pray for harmony. Pray for spiritual power."



Upcoming Events

Youth's Super Summer

Attention all youth! Looking for a fun week? Super Summer is coming back to the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor June 20-24. Find out about more details and other locations at www.supersummer.com.



Kidz Kamp

July 21-25

For preteens who have completed grades 3, 4, 5 and 6. For additional information, contact David Cozart at 254-662-2728, visit the website www.kidzkamptexas.com or view the Facebook page "Kidz Kamp Preteen

World Changers in Waco July 18-23

Local churches are still needed to offer prayer, to provide lunch for the crews, act as supervisors, to provide refreshments and to follow up on decisions of faith. A prayer guide is available. Contact Brian Miller at 417-631-8717 or mchriste91@gmail.com.

Vacation Bible School

It's that time of year! Several churches in the Waco area are offering Vacation Bible School. Listed below are a few churches to remember in prayer this month as they minister to children.



<u>Church</u>	<u>Date</u>
Christ the King Baptist Church	June 6-10
Dayspring Baptist Church	June 6-10
Highland Baptist Church	June 6-10
West Robinson Baptist Church	June 6-10
Brazos Meadows Baptist Church	June 12-15
Park Lake Drive Baptist Church	June 12-15
Cornerstone Baptist Church	June 12-16
Meadowbrook Baptist Church	June 12-16
Calvary Baptist Church	June 12-17
FBC Waco	June 13-17
FBC Woodway	June 13-17
FBC China Spring	June 20-23
FBC Hewitt	June 20-23
Carver Park Baptist Church	June 20-24
Columbus Avenue Baptist Church	June 20-24
FBC Crawford	June 20-24
New Hope Baptist Church	June 20-24
FBC Lorena	June 25-29
Bosqueville Baptist Church	June 26-30
Liberty Hill Baptist Church	June 27-July 1

*If your church would like to add a VBS week to the summer prayer list, please contact Katelyn at 254-753-2408 or admin@wacoregionalbaptistassociation.org.

Other May Events

Thursday, June 2, 9:00am — Missions Development Team Meeting.
June 3-11 — Texas Baptist Men Leadership Training. Latham Springs.
June 6-7 — Coaching Clinic. HBMC — Green and Gold Room.
Thursday, June 9, 9:00am — Facility Management Training. Baylor.
Friday, June 10, 12:00noon — Restorative Justice Meeting. HBMC—Garden Room.
Sunday, June 12 — Global Day of Prayer.
Sunday, June 19 — Father's Day.
Tuesday, June 21 — Leadership Development Team Meeting.
Tuesday, June 21, 4:00pm — Administrative Team Meeting.
June 21-25 — GA Camp. Latham Springs.
Sunday, June 26 — Mission: Dignity Sunday. Visit www.MissionDignitySBC.org.

Church Mission Trips

Several churches in the Waco Regional Baptist Association have organized mission trips for this month. Please pray for our church groups as they minister to others in our state, country and world.



<u>Church</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Date</u>
FBC Woodway	Namibia	June 10-26
Columbus Avenue Baptist Church	Honduras	June 11-18
Highland Baptist Church	Washington D.C.	June 11-28
Meadowbrook Baptist Church	Montana	June 16-26
Acts Christian Fellowship	Haiti	June 20-17
Park Lake Drive Baptist Church	Louisiana	June 22-26
Highland Baptist Church	Guatemala	June 25-July 2
FBC Woodway	La Grulla, TX	June 26-July 2

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Community News

Continue to pray for WRBA churches seeking a Pastor:
Emmanuel, FBC McGregor, Highland, Shiloh

Congratulations to Seventh and James Baptist Church and their new pastor, Rev. Erin Blake Conaway! He will start in August.

Online Community



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

WRBA is on Twitter (WRBACHurches) and Facebook.