



## WACO REGIONAL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

### Family News

#### — FROM YOUR DIRECTOR —



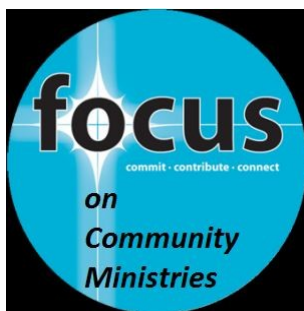
A cursory look in the Yellowpages under the category of “churches” often gives a misleading idea about how “churched” our communities are. If you look at a community through physical eyes, you see lots of church buildings scattered around. But if you look at the community through the eyes of the people who live here, it appears very different.

We are currently conducting a *Discover! Waco* project through which we hope to see our communities with different eyes. The area of study this year is comprised of the communities between Lake Waco, Highway 6 and Loop 340. We saw one example of this during a training event for volunteers at Central Baptist Church. When we examined the demographic data in a one-mile radius around that church, we saw that there are 11,364 people of which 70% identify themselves as Hispanic. Then as we looked at the churches that might serve that area, we realized that Central is one of the two Hispanic Baptist churches in that area. With an average attendance of approximately 20 Hispanics and 15 Anglos, this congregation is working hard to reach their community. I would imagine that when we conclude this study, we will find out that there are many neighborhoods with people groups who are unreached by the churches that are physically present but culturally disconnected. This explains why the Missions Development team is praying and seeking for God to bring forth new church starts and church planters to reach these new communities in their cultural context.

Would you join us in that prayer?

Tim

## — From the Associate Director —



### Church Strengthening Process — Williams Creek Baptist Church

Over the past couple of months I've described my understanding of "church" as a prophetic community of faith. I've used that phrase for a number of years with each of those words containing tremendous significance. You may remember that by "prophetic" I mean transformational—exacting transformation both within the church membership and in the church's immediate and extended contexts. A church is not defined by her numbers of members, size of budget, etc., but by the manner and extent to which her members incarnate the teachings of Christ and, in turn, by the way the church positively impacts her community and the world.

One of the ways that Waco Regional Baptist Association assists churches enhance their prophetic impact in their communities is through the Church Strengthening Process. During the month of February, Williams Creek Baptist Church became the first of our WRBA churches to vote to enter into the full Church Strengthening Process. According to Pastor Billy Burchfield, that decision has already served to generate a fresh sense of optimism of what God holds in store for Williams Creek. His desire and that of the church's leadership is to truly be a prophetic community of faith.

As defined by the WRBA Church Strengthening Team, the Church Strengthening Process is designed to produce sustained growth in a church for the five years following its admission into the process. This is accomplished by healthy elements of the association and sister churches coming alongside the church in order to encourage enhanced vitality and expanded ministry. The Church Strengthening Process includes:

- A strategic planning process involving the entire church body.
- Coaching for the pastor and other full-time ministerial church staff.
- A resource church relationship.
- Learning covenants written by each person who leads any group of people within the church.
- Matching funds from WRBA to the church's contribution up to \$5000 to pay for the components of the process and the realization of some of the strategic goals identified during the process.
- The goal of the process is to produce measurable growth for the five years following admission to the process based upon the average small group Bible study attendance.

For more information about the Church Strengthening Process and how your church may participate, go to the WRBA website under the Ministries tab and click on Church Strengthening. Feel free to call or write with any question you may have about this process or any aspect of community ministry in the association. I appreciate the privilege of working with so many churches that are truly prophetic in their impact.

Dane Fowlkes, Ph.D.  
Associate Director  
[associate@wacoregionalbaptistassociation.org](mailto:associate@wacoregionalbaptistassociation.org)

# ———— The Body of Believers ————

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

New Beginnings Christian Fellowship (NBCF) has a name to match the church — a place for the unchurched to start new lives with other believers.

Pastor Charles Howard said, "We are connecting with our community and connecting with God,...growing in our faith,...and serving."

Howard started NBCF in 2006 hoping to reach and disciple the unchurched who may feel uncomfortable in some church settings. The former law enforcement officer had been a youth pastor for eight years and wanted a place where people had no excuses against coming to worship.

June will be NBCF's five year anniversary, and Howard says they're "starting to see the first fruits." Since many of the people who came were unchurched or new believers, it took a while to disciple and grow.

Steve Clayton has been a part of NBCF since its inception and is the deacon. He joined because he "wanted to change (his) life for the better."

Clayton said, "(I) really enjoy the family atmosphere, and I have grown so much in the last four years. I don't know where I would be if I hadn't joined the church. The pastor is so down to earth and has really been a great friend and mentor to me."

Anyone interested in joining NBCF goes through a 6-week membership class. The people are connecting, being disciplined and learning about their spiritual gifts for service before they are members.

The first few months consisted of five families at a hotel. Now the church has two buildings on Gholson Road with an average of 70-80 people each Sunday and about 50 people each Wednesday. Because of limits on seating, NBCF will have two church services each week starting East Sunday. They hope to keep people in close communion with each other.

While they struggle for space, Howard is not worried. He gave examples of donated chairs and a church van with discounted property and buildings.

"Every need that we've had, we've prayed and God blesses us," he said.

Howard does not claim to be the head of the church. This leads the church group to meet and pray as a body of believers to seek God's will.

Janice Pelton and her husband were two of the first few leaders of NBCF. They joined the praise team the month after the church started.

Pelton said, "As a church body, we are being taught the importance of taking all of our concerns to the Lord, and then waiting on His response. God has been faithful to deliver on every need that has been brought before Him. Our faith continues to grow as we see Him work in our midst. This is an exciting time for NBCF, and we look forward to seeing what God will do in the future of our church."

Matt. 6:33 is meaningful to Howard. "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."

"That's proven true in my life personally, and it's proven true in the church," he said.

For more information, visit NBCF on Facebook or call 799-1611.

# Upcoming Events

## April Pastors' Conference April 6, 2011

Great Hall at Truett Seminary. 12:00noon.  
The cost for the meal is \$5.00.

**Guest Speaker: TBA**

To register contact the WRBA office at 753-2408 or  
[admin@wacoregionalbaptistassociation.org](mailto:admin@wacoregionalbaptistassociation.org).

Please RSVP by **March 31st**.

### **Annie Armstrong Easter Offering** North American Missions Week of Prayer March 6-13

Gifts from the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering support North American missionary teams in efforts to reach out to an estimated 259 million North Americans who have not accept Christ.

National Goal: \$70 million  
Received in 2010: \$54.3 million

### **"I, II, and III John: The Life of Christ in the Church" Seminar**

Christ the King Baptist Church  
March 24,

9:00am-12:00noon (Refreshments before and lunch afterward)

The teacher is Robert B. Sloan Jr., president of Houston Baptist University, distinguished New Testament scholar, and outstanding preacher.

There is no charge, but please register by March 21 for lunch.  
Contact Julie Covington at 710-4677 or [Julie\\_Covington@baylor.edu](mailto:Julie_Covington@baylor.edu).

### **Journey — Perspectives Truett Youth Conference** March 25-26

Tickets are \$17.00. Register by March 9 to get a free T-shirt.  
Join the Facebook group at [facebook.com/PerspectivesTruettYouth-Conference](https://www.facebook.com/PerspectivesTruettYouth-Conference). For more information e-mail Dr. Amy Jacober at [Amy\\_Jacober@baylor.edu](mailto:Amy_Jacober@baylor.edu).

### **Men's Conference — Leap of Faith**

April 30. 8:00am-12:45pm  
Midway ISD-Performing Arts Center

Tickets are \$39.00, students are free with registration.  
Register at [www.menatthecross.org](http://www.menatthecross.org) for tickets.

### **Facilitator Training — For Cross-Cultural Service**

April 13-14, FBC Woodway  
Registration Fee: \$200  
Dr. Mike Stroope at Truett Seminary will lead the training session.

## **Other March Events**

**Tuesday, March 1, 4:00pm** — Center for Christian Music Studies at Baylor guest speaker **Gloria Gaither**. Waco Hall, Recital Hall II.

**Wednesday, March 2, 12noon** — **March Pastors' Conference**.  
Truett Seminary.

**Thursday, March 3, 9:00am** — **WRBA Missions Development Team**. WRBA-HBMC.

**Tuesday, March 22, 12:00noon** — **WRBA Leadership Development Team**. WRBA-HBMC Cafeteria.

**Tuesday, March 22, 4:00pm** — **WRBA Administrative Team**. WRBA-HBMC.

**March 22-24** — **Baptist Ministers' Union**. Good Samaritan Baptist Church.

**Tuesday, March 29, 5:00pm** — **WRBA Community Ministries Team Meeting**. University Baptist Church.

**Sunday, April 10, 4:00pm** — **VBS Training Session**. Columbus Avenue Baptist Church.

## **Community News**

**Continue to pray for WRBA churches seeking a Pastor:**  
Seventh and James, Emmanuel, FBC McGregor, Third Street

### **Positions Filled**

Congratulations to FBC McGregor and their new Youth Minister Daniel Steis.

Congratulations to Calvary Baptist Church and their new Youth Minister Trevor Brown.

Waco FBC has a **Spanish Service** on Sundays at 10:30am in the Chapel and a Spanish Bible study that night. Call 754-3503 for more information.

## **Discover! Waco**

*Discover! Waco* is getting ready for the second training. It will take place at Western Heights Baptist Church on Thursday, March 3 at 6:00pm. I will take care of dinner. Please confirm whether or not you will join us by Wednesday, March 2 at 12:00noon so that I know how much food to get. Call (254) 339-6663 if you have any questions.

Rev. Rod Lindsey  
*Discover! Waco* Project Director

## **Online Community**

The Waco Regional Baptist Association is on Facebook and Twitter (WRBACHurches).  
Join us to see photos, event reminders and more.

To receive this newsletter by e-mail call 753-2408 or e-mail  
[admin@wacoregionalbaptistassociation.org](mailto:admin@wacoregionalbaptistassociation.org).