



WACO REGIONAL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

Family News

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A Word From Our Associate Director



RESTORATIVE JUSTICE MINISTRY

Our Executive Board recently approved a change that is much more than a change in name. Instead of limiting our involvement to proclaiming the gospel in the county jail weekly, we are broadening our scope to engage in “Restorative Justice Ministry.” But what, exactly, do we mean by “restorative justice”, and how does this broaden our scope of ministry?

In its fullest and best sense, restorative justice is both a way of seeing crime correctly and a way of responding to crime appropriately. Restorative Justice calls for the best that Christians have to give to a hurting world—courage, compassion, humility, wisdom, and sacrifice in the face of evil, specifically evil unleashed in crimes. Restorative justice is a biblical approach to dealing with crime and punishment and an appropriate biblical mandate for such involvement comes from **Micah 6:8**:

“He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.” (New International Version)

This emphasizes ministry to those in the criminal justice system: offenders and their families; victims and their families; law enforcement, correctional facility staff, and court employees, among others. Each group requires a different type of ministry. The term “restorative justice” is a relatively new term that reflects the expanded scope of what many of us know as jail or prison ministry. Restorative Justice views criminal acts comprehensively. Rather than defining crime only as lawbreaking, it recognizes that offenders harm victims, communities and even themselves. It also measures success differently. Rather than measuring how much punishment has been inflicted, it measures how much harm has been repaired or prevented. More specific to church involvement, restorative justice recognizes the importance of community involvement and initiative in responding to and reducing crime, rather than leaving the problem of crime to the government alone.

We can become immobilized by the enormity of the problem or we can develop ministries to help make a difference. The churches of Waco Regional Baptist Association have decided to do just that. And when local churches engage victims, offenders and criminal justice employees, the results are transformational. I look forward to sharing more with you about these efforts in the months ahead.

Dr. Dane Fowlkes
Associate Director

FROM YOUR DIRECTOR

As I write this article, we have just finished our annual meeting at First Baptist Church, Waco. The entire evening was an amazing and wonderful event to watch. So many people from all sorts of churches went to great extremes to make the evening pleasant and productive. It took months of work and preparation on the part of the Sesquicentennial Planning Committee to put this masterpiece together. Those committee members were: Paul Stripling, chair, Joe Bailey, Rosalie Beck, Chuck Bridwell, Greg Brumit, Julie Covington, Glenn Hilburn, Kathy Hillman, Shelton Markham, Roy Marshall, Michael Moore, David Shuttlesworth, Mike Toby and Chris Wommack. These members went way beyond the call of duty in every respect. The members and staff of the First Baptist Church were also wonderful in their hospitality and their work to support the whole event. Others contributed invaluable to the production of the video about the history of the Association. Our staff, Carol, Edna, Dane and Paul Briggs (who is doing his mentoring with me this semester) did the work of twenty people in the weeks leading up to the event. Volunteers helped with the food, programs, books of reports, publicity, book sales, sound and playing the instruments.

You got the picture. Without this spirit of collaboration, nothing of this annual meeting would have been possible. This is not unusual for the Baptists of this Waco Region. This has been the spirit that has blessed the churches and the community for many years now. This is part of our heritage and culture. We are rich! We are blessed! Thank you for allowing me to be a part of this beautiful thing called the Waco Regional Baptist Association. In His Service,

Tim

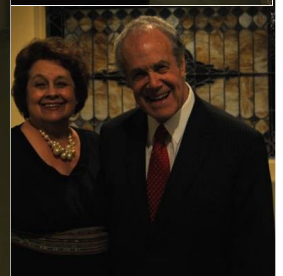




WACO REGIONAL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION SESQUICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

Waco Regional Baptist Association observed its 150th Anniversary on Tuesday, October 26 at First Baptist Church, Waco.

The event began with a well attended Business Session. Later 200+ members of our Association gathered to share a meal and a time of fellowship expertly handled by Roy Marshall and his staff of volunteers. An even larger crowd joined in worship where, in period costume, Chris Wommack led in an historical time of singing and celebrating and Kathy Hillman, our Association's Moderator who had earlier in the evening presided over our business session, helped to remind us of our history as Baptists in the Waco area as she introduced individuals who were part of the program. Noted Christian humorist and Baylor graduate Dennis Swanberg helped us to laugh at ourselves and celebrate our faith while Kurt Kaiser, renowned pianist and composer, provided additional music for the worship ex-



Thanks to First Baptist Church, Waco for the use of their beautiful facility and for all the work their staff and congregation put in to make the evening a success.

Lorenzo Peña as well as others from the Texas Baptists (BGCT) joined us in our celebration and recognized the 150 years of ministry in and through the churches in the area. Other leaders in our community including Ken Starr, President of Baylor University and his wife Alice, and Glenn Robinson of Hillcrest Hospital participated.



Paul Stripling, who chaired the committee that planned the meeting, released *Turning Points in the History of the Waco Regional Baptist Association, 1860-2010* at the event. WRBA's Executive Director Emeritus signed copies of his book at the WRBA 150th Annual Meeting and was presented with a special publishers copy of the book. Copies are available through the Association at the cost \$7.00. If you are interest in purchasing the book call 753-2408 or email Carol at admin@wacoregionalbaptistassociation.org



Week of Prayer, Nov. 28-Dec. 5, 2010

It's a beautiful vision: People who speak Kirmanjki and Kabyle, Thai and Tatar, and use sign language in Czech—all knowing and praising God. It's a vision that comes closer to being realized every year as Christians seek unreached people groups to tell them the story of Jesus.

Southern Baptists have followed God's lead to focus attention on bringing all the world's peoples to Him. And God has responded to the faithfulness of His people. There is much to celebrate! Are we there yet? Not yet.

But for the first time in history, we can identify the people groups that remain untouched by the Gospel. We can get there in our generation! But that last part of the journey may be the hardest. It will take all of us—our churches, our missionaries, our national partners, our Great Commission partners.

Southern Baptists must continue to increase their giving to support missionaries through the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering®. They must pray strategically. And they must own the Great Commission as never before to see that all peoples know Him.

Retired Ministers and Missionary Fellowship

A meeting is planned on November 18th at Noon at First Baptist Waco.
The price of the meal will be \$6.00.
Reservations must be made by November 12.

Dr. Randal Bradley, from the Music Department, Baylor University will be bringing the program.

You can make reservations by sending an email to admin@wacoregionalbaptistassociation.org or by calling 753-2408.

WELCOME

Welcome new church staff members in our Association

Bill Pack —Pastor at Downsville Baptist Church

Chris Doe — Pastor at North Waco Baptist Church

Chris Pillsbary — Minister of Music at First Baptist Robinson

Continue to Pray for WRBA Pastorless Churches

Oak Grove, El Calvario, Harris Creek, Seventh and James, Emmanuel