

SOUTHERN BAPTIST
TEXAN

VOLUME 24 | NO. 1



UNDERSTANDING

The

ASSIGNMENT

Growing lostness + Christ's call to evangelize =

urgent need



The Well Baptist Church is meeting its community where it's at—literally



Luter on emphasizing the gospel and the day that changed his life



Eternities are being impacted as rural East Texas church **EMBRACES COOPERATIVE WORK**



Focusing on what truly matters in 2025

I **LEAD A SMALL GROUP** at our church. It is a great group of people in different stages of life who desire a close community to do life with. We are currently diving into Ecclesiastes together. This has been such a great challenge for us as we think about what kind of life is really worth pursuing.

C.T. Studd once wrote, “Only one life, ‘twill soon be past, only what’s done for Christ will last.” This statement, paired with studying Ecclesiastes, has caused me to rethink my priorities for 2025. If you are like me, life gets super busy. Living with the pressures that come along with work, family, kids’ activities, and all other aspects of life can feel daunting. Often, while the intentions of the heart are good and postured correctly, life happens, priorities get rearranged, and we find ourselves spending time pursuing good things more than the great things we should pursue.

Allow me to suggest three key priorities in our lives to diligently keep in focus in the coming year:

1. Walk closely with God

In the fast-paced, ever-chaotic pursuit of life, we must remember to walk daily with God. We all have challenges, busy schedules, work demands, and family obligations. These things close in on you and take every moment you have. While they are all necessary, prioritize spending time daily with Jesus. You will be a better person, friend, spouse, parent, and leader if you are consistently walking with God.

2. Be intentional about living on mission

Ecclesiastes is a good reminder that most of what we pursue has no eternal value. What would our lives look like if we decide this is the year in which we sell out to living on mission where God has put us? I know most who read this are believers who love Jesus and His church. However, I also know we can lose sight of the mission for things that don’t really matter. I encourage you to ask the Lord to help you live on mission this year like never before.

3. Practice generosity

Throughout the year, God will likely bring unexpected opportunities to you. These will come in many different shapes and forms. There will also be opportunities in which you can be joyfully generous. 2 Corinthians 9:7 says, “God loves a cheerful giver.” As you walk with God this year, ask Him to make you aware of opportunities to invest in people generously for His glory. It will change you!

Having the right priorities is essential. They help us stay focused on the real reasons we exist. They give us the chance to capitalize on opportunities to make an eternal difference. We are not guaranteed tomorrow, so we must make today count. I challenge you to re-evaluate your priorities and, if needed, align them with the things that truly matter. I love you and am humbled to serve you!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nathan Lorick". The signature is fluid and cursive.

nlorick@sbtexas.com

“IN THE FAST-PACED, EVER-CHAOTIC PURSUIT OF LIFE, WE MUST REMEMBER TO WALK DAILY WITH GOD. ... YOU WILL BE A BETTER PERSON, FRIEND, SPOUSE, PARENT, AND LEADER IF YOU ARE CONSISTENTLY WALKING WITH GOD.”

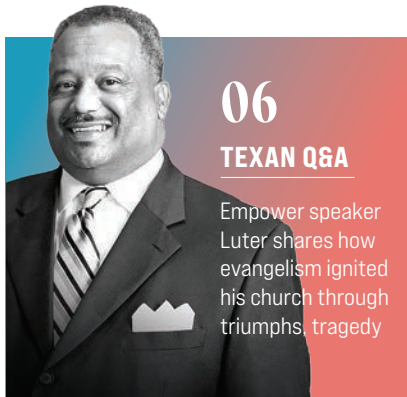
IN THIS ISSUE

VOLUME 24 ————— NO.1 ————— TEXAN.DIGITAL

02 FROM THE EDITOR
It starts with a conversation

04 SBTC PRESIDENT
Trust the Lord and get to work!

EMPOWER SPECIAL ★ EDITION

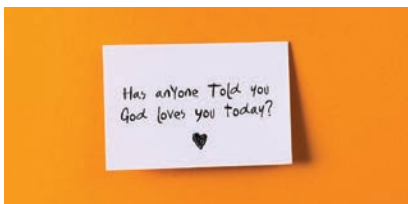


08 **STUDENT RALLY**
As Empower Student Rally nears, teen testifies to how Jesus used last year's event as a spiritual wake-up call

11 **EMPOWER SCHEDULE**

12 **Worth every mile**
Couple makes annual trip from Mexico to attend Apoderados at SBTC's Empower Conference

15 **Vale la pena cada milla**
Pareja viaja cada año desde México para asistir a Apoderados en la Conferencia Empower de la SBTC



24 **WOMEN'S MINISTRY**
An unexpected and rewarding Journey
FBC New Braunfels member didn't intend to lead women's ministry, but God had other plans

27 **TEXAN Q&A**
Five minutes with Corey Paul



32 **JESUS IS WRITING MY STORY**
Even in grief, God has provided in more ways than I could ever imagine

34 **COOPERATIVE PROGRAM**
For Austin church with strong ties to seminary, giving to CP is receiving

36 **COOPERATIVE PROGRAM**
Working together to 'sow bountifully'

37 **PRAYER**
SBTC pastor's book on Spurgeon underscores the primacy of prayer

38 **OUTREACH**
The church has left the building

44 **PASTORAL WELLNESS**
4 common questions about pastors' kids

SOUTHERN BAPTIST
TEXAN

✕ f @sbtexan Visit texan.digital

Nathan Lorick **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**
Joe Lightner **ASSOCIATE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**
Mitch Tidwell **DMC SENIOR STRATEGIST**
Jayson Larson **EDITOR**
Lightner Creative **DESIGN & LAYOUT**

THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST TEXAN

Official magazine of the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention
MAIL P.O. Box 1988 • Grapevine, TX 76099-1988

TOLL-FREE 877-953-7282

PHONE 817-552-2500

FAX 817-552-2520

EMAIL jlarrison@sbtexas.com



CORRESPONDENTS

Josh Allen, Mark Dance, Danny Forshee, Matt Henslee,
Gary Ledbetter, Erin Roach, Jane Rodgers, Arlene Sanabria

HAVE YOU SUBSCRIBED TO THE TEXAN?

→ Scan QR code
or visit texan.digital/subscribe



OUR MISSION

Engage. Encourage. Equip.



*A higher standard.
A higher purpose.*



It starts with a conversation

OVER THE YEARS, we've highlighted many of the ways God has used the churches of the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention to share His good news.

A couple in one church organized an outreach event and invited hundreds of high school football players to hear a Christian sports television personality share his testimony. A group from another church visited local businesses open around Christmas when many others were closed, serving workers donuts and singing carols. In another part of the state, a few brave souls banded together, going door to door to bring the message of Jesus to their neighbors' doorsteps.

Some were elaborate, some were simple. But in each instance, the gospel was shared and God's people were faithful to do whatever it took to tell people about Jesus.

In this first issue of 2025, we once again highlight some of the ways God is using His people to grow His kingdom. In the face of challenging circumstances, one church recommitted to making evangelism one of its top priorities and now hears

something on Sunday mornings that members hadn't heard in previous years—the voices of children in the sanctuary. Another church took what many would consider an inconvenience—not having a consistent place to worship one Sunday a month—and used their circumstances for God's glory, hosting their services in locations throughout their city.

I love that the *Texan* gets to tell these stories, and based on reader feedback, you do, too. As we publish them, however, I'm always sensitive to the reality that sharing Jesus can happen any number of ways. Sharing the gospel doesn't require a lot of money, elaborately planned outreaches, or next-level creativity. Those things are great, but we must always remember that sharing Jesus can start with a simple conversation. It can be as easy as asking someone, "Who do you think Jesus is?"

Because we live in a results-driven culture, we can run the risk of letting a scoreboard mentality slip into our faith life. In other words, we can begin to believe that if we're not leading large numbers of people to Christ, we're "less-than" Christians. The way I read God's Word, this isn't true. We have no control over whether people put their faith in Jesus. That's between them and the Holy Spirit who draws them in and enlightens them to the truth.

What we can control is being faithful to find ways—simple ways—to tell others about Jesus. Give an account for the hope that is in you. That's

what 1 Peter 3:15 says. Tell someone what Jesus has done for you. Be intentional about giving God glory when you're telling others how something went right in your life. Point out where God is in your story when things are going wrong. I challenge myself to find ways to slip Jesus' name into my everyday conversations, believing there is truly power in His name.

This summer, you and your church will have a great opportunity to mobilize and engage people in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex with simple-yet-powerful conversations about Jesus during the Crossover evangelism event that will be held in conjunction with the Southern Baptist Convention Annual Meeting in Dallas. You can find more information about to get involved with Crossover, including several important trainings happening this spring, within this issue's pages.

May we make much of Jesus in 2025 ...



APRIL 4, 2025

Preview Day



Preview Day is your chance to see everything Southwestern Seminary has to offer. Come meet your professors and fellow students, explore financial aid options, and experience the campus community for yourself on April 11.

Sign up for free at
[SWBTS.EDU/PREVIEW](https://www.swbts.edu/preview)



Trust the Lord and get to work!

THE ANNUAL SOUTHERN BAPTISTS OF TEXAS CONVENTION EMPOWER CONFERENCE is quickly approaching. I invite you to join with many other SBTC churches and be blessed and encouraged, as well as be challenged to share the good news of our Savior. We have some wonderful speakers and breakout sessions that will inspire and motivate you.

Speaking of motivational, Jordan Peterson's interview with Dallas Jenkins, the creator and director of "The Chosen," is one of the best things I have heard in a long time. I was enthralled with the testimony Dallas gave about how "The Chosen" came into existence. Peterson said it is an excellent production and the best Christian mini-series ever.

Dallas shared with much transparency how he hit rock bottom prior to "The Chosen." Around 2016, Dallas produced the film "The Resurrection of Gavin Stone." In his own words, he said it was a total failure. He and his wife sat still and wept as they realized how poorly the film had been received. He doubted his abilities and even considered giving up on creating and directing.

During this dark night of his soul, Dallas told Peterson, who was absolutely fixated on Dallas and the story he was telling, that his wife told him they needed to read the story in the gospels where Jesus fed the 5,000 (Matthew 14:13-21). He thought that

was rather odd, but Dallas went along and read with his wife the only miracle recorded by all four gospels except for the resurrection of Jesus from the grave. Jesus took two fish and five loaves of bread and fed 5,000 men plus the others. Some calculate that the number could have been as high as 20,000.

Not long after this, Dallas said he was on his computer at 4 a.m. working away. He was writing a 15-page critique of all that went wrong in the film he had worked so hard on. At that time, he received a Facebook message from a friend. His friend said he felt the Lord wanted him to tell Dallas this: "Focus on the bread and the fish." His friend wrote this note from Romania and had no idea Dallas and his wife had recently read the account of the feeding of the 5,000. Even Peterson acknowledged this was no mere coincidence.

Dallas said he got the message from the Lord loud and clear. He was to do what he was good at, and that was telling the good news of Jesus in fresh and creative ways. He felt the Lord affirming him and reminding him that he was no failure. He was not to worry himself with pleasing men or Hollywood. Rather, he was to focus on what God had called him and gifted him to do. The next year, he began working on "The Chosen."

Dallas and his wife trusted in the Lord, he quit leaning on his own understanding, and God divinely directed his path (Proverbs 3:5-6). Millions of viewers around the world have been blessed by "The Chosen."

Let me encourage you that you are not a failure! If you know Christ, then He lives in you by the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. Trust the Lord, do what He has gifted you to do, and get busy!



Feb. 24-25

SPECIAL ★ EDITION

Irving CONVENTION CENTER

EMPOWER

CONFERENCE

A transformative experience focused on innovative evangelism strategies, practical ministry skills, and encouragement to live missionally

06

Q&A WITH FRED LUTER

Sharing Jesus & standing firm

Empower speaker Luter shares how evangelism ignited his church through triumphs, tragedy

08

STUDENT RALLY

'I thought I was saved'

As Empower Student Rally nears, teen testifies to how Jesus used last year's event as a spiritual wake-up call

11

Empower schedule

Highlighting meals, sessions, and breakouts

12

APODERADOS

Worth every mile

Couple makes annual trip from Mexico to attend Apoderados at SBTC's Empower Conference

15

APODERADOS

Vale la pena cada milla

Pareja viaja cada año desde México para asistir a Apoderados en la Conferencia Empower de la SBTC

⇒ [SBTEXAS.COM/EMPOWER](https://sbctexas.com/empower) ⇐

SHARING JESUS

Q&A EMPOWER

EMPOWER SPEAKER LUTER
SHARES HOW EVANGELISM
IGNITED HIS CHURCH THROUGH
TRIUMPHS, TRAGEDY



Fred Luter is senior pastor of Franklin Avenue Baptist Church in New Orleans. He has experienced both triumph and tragedy during his nearly four decades of ministry service, including leading his congregation to minister to a devastated city following Hurricane Katrina in 2005 to being elected the first African American president of the Southern Baptist Convention in 2012. Luter will speak at the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention's Empower Conference in February. He recently spoke with *Texan* editor Jayson Larson about his calling and the impact evangelism has had on his church and city.

You surrendered your life to Christ after a motorcycle accident in 1977 and began preaching the gospel on a street corner in New Orleans shortly thereafter. That's a bold way for a new believer to begin sharing his faith.

FRED LUTER: I was brought up in church. My mom and dad divorced when I was six years old, but one of Mama's rules was on Sunday morning, everybody in this house was going to church. She was a single parent with five of us. So, I was in church on Sunday morning, but in the club on Sunday night. I was doing a whole lot of crazy things.

When I got saved in 1977, it was such a traumatic event for me. It literally transformed my life. [After the motorcycle wreck], I was in the hospital and had a hole in my head, compound fracture in my leg, and I had a 50/50 chance of living. A deacon in the church I grew up in came to my hospital bed, put his finger in my face, and said, "You need to get your life together because you could have died and you'd have gone straight to hell." He did not pull any punches.

That night, I cried out to God and said, "God, I don't know if I'm going to live or die, but I'll make a deal with you. If I wake up tomorrow morning, I'll serve you all the days of my life." I woke up the next morning ... and the transformation for me was immediate. It was conviction. It was a moment when I just felt that God was giving me another chance.

& STANDING FIRM

So because of my newfound faith, and because of what God had done in my life, I wanted all those guys that I ran the street with to know the same Jesus that I knew. I was on the street corners sharing the gospel and they were laughing at me. They thought, “He’s going to get over it.” But the boldness came from the fact that because of what God did in my life, He could do the same thing in the lives of these guys I was running the street with. So every Saturday at 12 noon, I was on the street corner in the Lower Ninth Ward sharing the gospel.

Franklin Avenue started with 65 members when you arrived and has grown to a congregation that now reaches and impacts thousands. How have you led your church to mobilize through evangelism, and what role has that played in its growth?

FL: We tried all kinds of things to get more people involved in soul-winning and sharing their faith. But one [that has worked] is this concept I call FRAngelism. It’s not original with me. FRAngelism is an acronym for friends, relatives, associates, and neighbors. The concept is that everybody in the church has a boss, an unchurched friend, relative, associate, coworker, or neighbor. So I started having classes on how to share your faith in just three minutes. The first minute, you talk about your life before Christ. The second minute is how you got saved, and then the third minute, you tell about what Christ has done in your life since you’ve been born again. I tell our people to share their faith, share their testimony, and then invite those individuals to church. And man, it caught on like wildfire.

We started having FRAngelism months at the church. ... Every first Sunday would be “Friends Sunday” where people would invite their

friends. Every second Sunday would be relatives. Every third Sunday, co-workers, neighbors, associates. And every fourth Sunday would be neighbors. We make a big deal about it and I talk about it from the pulpit. It took off. People started spreading the word about their relationship with Christ and we never looked back. We’ve never been on TV, never been on the radio. Our growth happened as a result of people in our church sharing their testimonies with friends, relatives, associates, and neighbors, and then inviting them to their local church.

Sharing Jesus with others can often feel intimidating or make people feel fearful. Why do you think that is, and how can pastors lead their congregations to overcome those fears?

FL: I think the reason people are fearful, one, is because of the day and time we’re living in. We’re living in a crazy time. I’m 68, and when I grew up, you were in church whether you were saved or not. People had a healthy fear of God. But we live in a day and time ... we’re living in a society where Satan is truly the prince of the power of the air. People can be mean, vindictive. They cuss you out. So, I think a lot of people are just fearful of approaching total strangers to share their faith. That’s why the FRAngelism thing is so effective—because these are people you already have relationships with.

Pastors are charged to do two things: preach and teach. I think we need to preach sermons on evangelism, teach lessons on evangelism, and just remind the people that this is a charge that’s been given to us by Jesus Christ Himself. Matthew 28:19-20—go unto all the world and baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Acts 1:8

says you shall receive power after the Holy Ghost has come upon you. The thing I want to encourage pastors to do ... is to equip the saints. One of the ways you equip the saints is to equip them in the area of evangelism by teaching, preaching, and living evangelism, sharing with them how God did it in your life and how they’re expected to do the same.

Pastoring is a challenging calling. How might you encourage those pastors who are on the front lines of a spiritual battle that can incredibly rewarding but also heartbreaking and exhausting?

FL: Pastoring is not easy. My word to pastors is that, No. 1, you’ve got to never, ever forget who called you. God called you. The deacons didn’t call you, the trustees didn’t call you, your mom and your dad didn’t call you. You got to realize God called you. And, No. 2, if God called you, then He equipped you to handle any situation you need to handle. The fact of the matter is, spiritual warfare is a reality in every pastor’s life, because the devil knows if he can get the head—the leader—the body will follow.

And then No. 3, when those difficult times come—and they will—that’s when you’ve got to do what my wife told me one day when I was having a pity party about the ministry. My wife looked at me and said, “Boy, you need to go listen to some of your sermons today. What you’re telling other people, you need to listen to it [yourself] right now.” Bro, during those tough times, we’ve got to continue to lean on God, be faithful to what God has called us to do, and understand that God has equipped us and empowered us. That’s the time we need to put on the whole armor of God and stand firm in the midst of the attacks of the enemy.



‘I THOUGHT I WAS SAVED’

AS EMPOWER STUDENT RALLY
NEARS, TEEN TESTIFIES TO HOW
JESUS USED LAST YEAR’S EVENT
AS A SPIRITUAL WAKE-UP CALL

COLTON WELTMAN LISTENED INTENTLY as evangelist Ryan Fontenot shared the gospel with the audience of nearly 750 youth and leaders at last year’s Empower Conference Student Rally.

“I want you to know tonight that God loves you. God absolutely loves you,” Fontenot said. “Jesus loves you. Jesus will meet you. Jesus won’t leave you right where you are. ... You come to Jesus in order to get right with God.”



Colton, then a junior at Hebron High School in the Dallas suburb of Carrollton, wasn't sure. He had gone to church some and had even been baptized at a Christian summer camp. But was he saved?

Soon after Colton's camp baptism, his dad, Dean, who had been partly raised by his Jewish grandparents, became an "overnight convert" after recognizing the messianic message of Isaiah 53 while listening to sermons on the Torah.

"I thought I had accidentally skipped to the New Testament, but when I realized I was listening to the prophet Isaiah, I immediately knew Jesus was the Messiah," Dean recalled.

Afterward, he said he began to see Jesus everywhere in the Old Testament. He started taking the whole family to church, eventually finding a home at Lewisville's Lakeland Baptist.

Colton attended last February's Empower rally with friends at the invitation of Lakeland youth pastor Matt Wooster. And Colton had questions.

"I figured I should just be part of the group and go," Colton later said. "It turned out pretty good," he added, noting it was "pretty cool to see all those people give their lives to Christ that day," a reference to the 18 young people who expressed a decision to follow Jesus at the rally.

Colton wasn't one of them. Yet.

Wooster recalled that at the end of the rally, as Fontenot issued the gospel invitation, he turned to Colton and asked, "What do you think?"

Colton mentioned his prior baptism. When Wooster asked him why he had been baptized, the student replied, "It seemed like the next best step to take."

Wooster responded by walking Colton through the meaning of baptism as a public demonstration of faith in Christ. He shared the Romans Road to salvation with Colton, echoing Fontenot's message.

"Can I make Jesus my Savior?"

"You mean right now?"

"Yep."

"We prayed together about the Holy Spirit moving Colton towards submitting his life to Jesus," Wooster said. Later Colton texted Wooster, requesting a graphic of the Romans Road.

Saved from sin

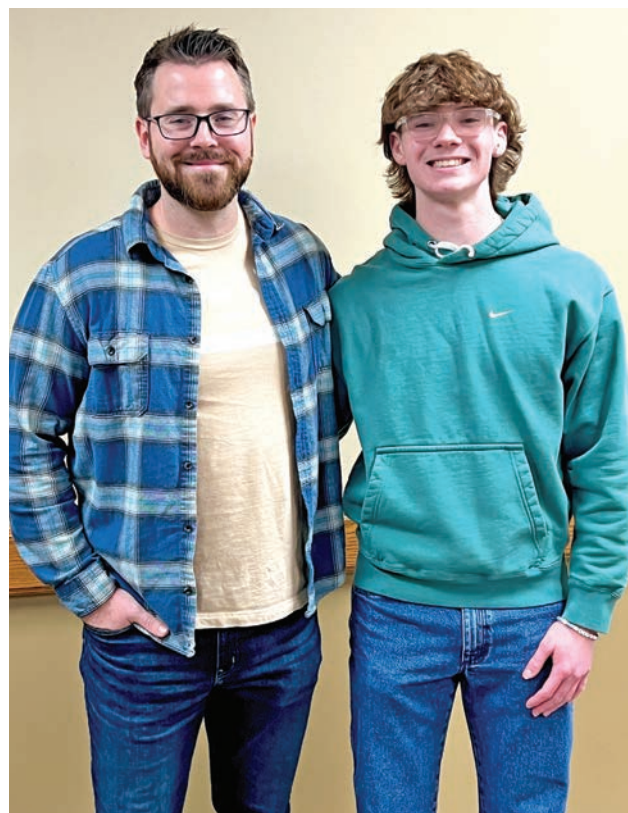
Back at Lakeland, Wooster and Colton chatted as the teen was about to drive off after the next Wednesday night's student service. As they talked, Colton brought up the student rally.

"Can I make Jesus my Savior?" he asked Wooster.

"You mean right now?" Wooster answered.

"Yep," Colton replied as he got out of his car to stand by Wooster, who led him in prayer to ask Jesus to become his Savior.

"I had him pray in the clearest way he knew how that sin was his biggest problem and that Jesus was the solution,"



A conversation between Lakeland youth pastor Matt Wooster (left) and Colton Weltman (right) following last year's Empower Conference Student Rally opened the door for Weltman to make the decision to truly follow Christ for the first time. **SUBMITTED PHOTO**

Wooster said. “... He was able to say in his own words that he needed forgiveness from sin and a relationship with Jesus, and that he needed to submit to Jesus. We prayed together, but in all that had transpired, the Holy Spirit had worked in his heart.”

“I thought I was saved. I thought I had already done everything right. But from our conversation, I realized I hadn’t. I didn’t feel like I was saved,” Colton said. “I hadn’t prayed a prayer like that. Not like that.”

Changed forever

Fast forward one year.

Now a senior at Hebron, Colton confirmed that Jesus continues to work in his life.

A competitive skeet shooter at school, Colton now clearly understands his life had fallen short of the target of God’s holiness and that he had found the answer in a relationship with Christ.

He likes to tell others that story, he says, “all the time.”

Toward the end of this fall’s term, he shared the gospel with another student in shop class. When the semester ended, their class schedules would change.

“I’ve talked to him every once in a while [about the Lord]. He knows he is a sinner. He doesn’t know Jesus,” Colton said. One day, “I just told him straight up: ‘The only way you’re ever gonna feel better is through Jesus. You’ve got to stop living this sinful life that you are living. As soon as you do, you’re gonna feel better.’”

Colton invited the friend to church.

“I don’t know if I’m ever going to see him again. Hebron is a big school,” Colton said. “But I told him to let me know if he wants to go to church.”



The entire Weltman family is active at Lakeland, including Colton’s mother Chinh and siblings Grayson and Emma.

Of his son’s first baptism, Dean said, “I don’t think he understood the meaning of being a Christian,” but since then, with his time at Lakeland, he “really came to understand and appreciate Jesus.”

The Weltman family (from left)—Dean, Grayson, Colton, Emma, and Chinh—are active at Lakeland Baptist in Lewisville. **SUBMITTED PHOTO**

Since Empower, Colton admits he is “taking Jesus seriously, reading the Bible, hanging out with people who are likeminded,” and trying to “implement what Jesus teaches” into his life.



Looking to Buy a Bus for Your Church in 2025?



Whether you’re looking for new or used, large or small, Carpenter Bus has the bus or van you’re looking for.

1. *Largest in-stock, ready-to-deliver inventory of buses and vans.*
2. *FREE 8 Year / Unlimited Mile Body and Chassis Warranty on all new buses and vans sold to churches.*
3. *Has sold more buses and vans to churches than any other dealer.*

Look no further!

America’s #1 Church Bus Dealer

Feb. 24-25

SCHEDULE

Irving CONVENTION CENTER

EMPOWER

CONFERENCE

SUNDAY, FEB. 23	6:30-8:30 PM	Student Rally	Grand Ballroom
MONDAY, FEB. 24	9:00-3:00 PM	Interim Pastor Equipping	Level 3 Room 11
	11:00-12:45	Monday Luncheons Classics Exec. Pastors and Admins Network Send Network SBTC Student Ministers Network	Grand Ballroom Jr. Ballroom D Jr. Ballroom A-B Texican Court Hotel
	1:00-4:00 PM	Monday Classics Women's Session	Main Floor Jr. Ballroom A-B
	1:00-2:30 2:45-4:15	Monday Afternoon Breakouts	Level 3
	4:30-6:00 PM	Monday Evening Meals Resourcing Churches Dinner Worship Leaders Network Dinner Young Pastors Network Dinner	Grand Ballroom 1-5 Jr. Ballroom D Texican
	6:25-8:30 PM	Monday Evening Session	Main Floor
	8:30-10:00 PM	Late Night	Jr. Ballroom A-B
TUESDAY, FEB. 25	7:30-8:45 AM	Advancing Mission Breakfast Taco Truck Breakfast	Grand Ballroom 1-5
	9:00-11:35 AM	Tuesday Morning Session	Main Floor
	11:45-12:50 PM	Cooperative Program Lunch	Grand Ballroom 1-5
	1:00-2:30 2:45-4:15 4:30-5:30 PM 5:45-7:15 PM	Tuesday Afternoon Breakouts Tuesday - Closing Session Black Church Network Dinner	Level 3 Main Floor Grand Ballroom 1-5

WORTH EVERY MILE



Couple makes annual trip from Mexico to attend Apoderados at SBTC's Empower Conference

By **Arlene Sanabria**

FOR MANY,

making a 1,200-mile round trip is anything but refreshing.

Yet that's a word Carlos and Birmania Cortes use when describing why they've traveled from Mexico to North Texas over the past few years to attend Apoderados, the Spanish session of the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention's Empower Conference.

Empower is hosted annually to encourage, equip, and inspire all church members to evangelize.

"All the topics at Apoderados have been very educational for us, and we feel that it refreshes our vision and helps us move forward," Birmania said, echoing the sentiments of her husband, Carlos, pastor of Eliacim Baptist Church in Monterrey, Mexico, the past 16 years.

The Corteses were first invited to Apoderados by their friend Cesar Gabriel, who pastors Trinity Baptist Church in Laredo. "You need to go to the Apoderados conference to refresh your vision and be up to date [in ministry]," they remember Gabriel telling them.

"When we talked with Pastor Gabriel, we realized that we have a very [similar] ministry calling," Birmania said, "because he also mobilizes his people to do missions in places of great need."

The Corteses have a heart for discipling and preparing missionaries. They met through a missionary association dedicated to recruiting college students to use their gifts and talents in the service of the Lord. Twenty years later, they continue to serve this ministry with great commitment and passion, with Carlos recruiting potential missionaries for training while Birmania forms prayer and discipleship groups at the university to reach out to students.

"I think we need to have as much information as possible to train the students [who could become future missionaries]," Carlos said. "They are ahead of us in terms of information, and we should try to educate ourselves in all possible areas to be able to minister to their needs." One of the ways they



Carlos and Birmania Cortes (pictured at left in the top photo and at right in the bottom photo) say Apoderados helps refresh their vision for ministry. **SUBMITTED PHOTOS**





do that, he said, is through sessions offered at Apoderados.

There are other ways Carlos has found support for his ministry at Apoderados, as well. He said the conference not only offers new information, but confirms the effectiveness of some of the work he and his wife have already been doing in the church, as well as identifying areas where they can improve.

“I received confirmation [at] one of the conferences that it is necessary for all ministries to be connected, for youth to interact with adults and vice versa,” Carlos said. “Principles such as these reaffirmed for me our vision of creating spaces that connect the church.”

The fact Apoderados heavily emphasizes evangelism is very important to the Corteses.

“Something that really struck me about Apoderados is that they directly address people’s need to share the gospel. I was very surprised that they had tracts to preach to all

“I received confirmation [at] one of the conferences that it is necessary for all ministries to be connected, for youth to interact with adults and vice versa.”

—CARLOS CORTES

Apoderados

Feb. 21-22

Lakeland Baptist Church, Lewisville

sbtexas.com/apoderados

kinds of people. They focus on preaching the gospel, the integrity and the healing of the servant of God,” Birmania said.

The Corteses said they enjoy sharing the information and tools they receive at Apoderados with others in their city. In addition to assisting her husband in ministry and evangelism, Birmania is a speaker for the Santiago Hickey Regional Baptist Convention and a teacher at the convention’s Bible institute in Nuevo Leon.

“All the information I receive, including the booklets, such as the data and statistics mentioned by the workshop speakers, has helped me a lot in my teaching and conferences,” Birmania said.

The couple said they plan to continue attending Apoderados as often as possible.

“I pray others will be encouraged to obey God and be equipped for their calling,” Carlos said.

VALE LA PENA CADA MILLA



Pareja viaja cada año desde México para asistir a Apoderados en la Conferencia Empower de la SBTC

Por Arlene Sanabria

PARA MUCHOS,

hacer un viaje de ida y vuelta de 1,200 millas es cualquier cosa menos refrescante.

Sin embargo, esa es la palabra que Carlos y Birmania Cortés usan para describir por qué han viajado de México al Norte de Texas estos últimos años para asistir a Apoderados, la sesión en español de la Conferencia Empower de la Convención de los Bautistas del Sur de Texas.

Apoderados se celebra anualmente para animar, equipar e inspirar a todos los miembros de la iglesia a evangelizar.

“Todos los temas en Apoderados han sido muy educativos para nosotros, y sentimos que refresca nuestra visión y nos ayuda a seguir adelante”, dijo Birmania, haciéndose eco de los sentimientos de su esposo Carlos, pastor de la Iglesia Bautista Eliacim en Monterrey, México, los últimos 16 años.

Los Cortés fueron invitados por primera vez a Apoderados por su amigo César Gabriel, pastor de la Iglesia Bautista Trinidad de Laredo. “Necesitan ir a la Conferencia Apoderados para refrescar su visión y estar al día [en el ministerio]”, recuerdan que les dijo Gabriel.

“Cuando hablamos con el pastor Gabriel, nos dimos cuenta de que tenemos un llamado ministerial muy a fines”, dijo Birmania, “porque él también moviliza a su gente para hacer misiones en lugares de gran necesidad.”

Los Cortés tienen un corazón para discipular y preparar misioneros. Se conocieron a través de una asociación misionera dedicada a reclutar estudiantes universitarios para aprovechar sus dones y talentos al servicio del Señor. Veinte años después, continúan sirviendo a este ministerio con gran compromiso y pasión, con Carlos reclutando misioneros potenciales para



su capacitación mientras Birmania formando grupos de oración y discipulado en la universidad para alcanzar a los estudiantes.

“Pienso que necesitamos tener toda la información posible para poder capacitar a los estudiantes [que podrían convertirse en futuros misioneros]”, afirma Carlos. “Ellos nos aventajan en términos de información, y debemos tratar de capacitarnos en todas las áreas posibles para poder ministrar a sus necesidades”. Una de las formas de hacerlo, dijo Él, es a través de las sesiones ofrecidas en Apoderados.

“Oro para que otros se sientan animados a obedecer a Dios y a capacitarse en su llamado”

—CARLOS CORTES

Carlos también ha encontrado en Apoderados otras formas de apoyar su ministerio. Él dijo que la conferencia no sólo ofrece nueva información, sino que confirma la eficacia de parte del trabajo que él y su esposa ya han estado haciendo en la iglesia, así como la identificación de áreas en las que pueden mejorar.

“En una de las conferencias recibí la confirmación de que es necesario que todos los ministerios estén conectados, que los jóvenes interactúen con los adultos y viceversa”, dijo Carlos. “Principios como estos reafirmaron nuestra visión de crear espacios que conecten a la iglesia”.

El hecho de que Apoderados enfatice fuertemente la evangelización es muy importante para los Cortés.

“Algo que realmente me llamó la atención de Apoderados es que abordan directamente la necesidad de la gente de compartir el Evangelio. Me sorprendió mucho que ofrezcan folletos para predicar a todo tipo de personas. Se centran en predicar el Evangelio, la integridad y la sanidad del siervo de Dios”, dijo Birmania.

Los Cortés dijeron que disfrutaban compartiendo la información y las herramientas que reciben en Apoderados con otros en su ciudad. Además de ayudar a su esposo en el ministerio y la evangelización, Birmania es oradora de la Convención Regional Bautista Santiago Hickey y maestra en el instituto bíblico de la convención en Nuevo León.

“Toda la información que recibo, incluyendo los folletos, como los datos y estadísticas que mencionan los conferencistas de los talleres, me ha ayudado mucho en mis enseñanzas y conferencias”, dijo Birmania.

La pareja dijo que planean seguir asistiendo a Apoderados tan a menudo como les sea posible.

“Oro para que otros se sientan animados a obedecer a Dios y a capacitarse en su llamado”, dijo Carlos.

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES THAT SUPPORT MINISTRY GROWTH

new certificates now earning

5.00% APY*

7-MONTH TERM

New Money Promos Available Through 2-28-25

SOUTHERN BAPTISTS OF TEXAS
FOUNDATION



CALL 844-351-8804 | VISIT [SBTEXASFOUNDATION.COM/NEW-DEPOSIT](https://www.sbtexasfoundation.com/new-deposit)

Open an account with as little as \$2,500. *Promotional rate is only available for new money investments. Promotional certificates will auto-renew for a 3-month term at the current yield unless the client provides other instructions before renewal. Certificate investments are available to a qualified class of Texas churches, ministries, and individuals.

Has anyone Told you
God loves you today?



EVANGELISM FOR everybody

How did God
use a simple,
practical
approach to
sharing the
gospel to grow
a church?

Here's our story

By **Matt Henslee**


But what if we got back to doing the main thing we're left here on earth to do in a way anyone can, no matter what? What if it was so easy that even a caveman could do it? What if, in the doing, you see lasting, growing change among your people and perhaps an enduring turnaround after a season of decline? I'm talking about evangelism, but not as you'd expect.

Plymouth Park Baptist Church had been in a long season of decline. From a megachurch well over a decade ago to a little over 100 on Sundays, the church was in desperate need of revitalization—fast—when I became the pastor. We had massive buildings in disrepair, an aging congregation, and a starkly different demographic than when the church started 70 years ago. Projections revealed we were only a few years from closing our doors unless we saw what many would call a miracle.

We could disband our congregation and dissolve our assets, merge with another church in town, or sell our buildings and relocate. Those were our options if you talked to most, but was God surprised by the changing demographic around us? Was He powerless or unwilling to breathe new life into us right where we were? Do we not serve a God who eats impossible for breakfast? That became my battle cry as my family got to work with our new church family.

When it comes to church revitalization, I think one of your best bets is low-hanging fruit. Getting some small wins, like the debt-snowball strategy, builds momentum and helps gain bigger and bigger wins. The same is true with evangelism. Sure, you could launch a massive evangelism training and campaign on day one, but would you have the buy-in to pull it off? What if, instead, you look for ways to get smaller wins, build momentum, and allow that to lead the way to bigger wins and even church revitalization itself?

That's what we did with the saints called Plymouth Park Baptist Church. With an aging congregation untrained for evangelism, I wasn't sure selling them on making a major commitment to a massive evangelism training and campaign was the way to go. Instead, we started providing small handouts with some simple information about the church and I began using some of my pulpit time to encourage them to find someone, anyone—a family member, friend, neighbor, coworker, or the cashier at the local grocery store—to ask them how they could pray for them.



D **O YOU REMEMBER** those old insurance commercials with the phrase, “So easy, a caveman could do it,” in the early 2000s? I do, though the grey hairs in my beard remind me that was nearly a quarter century ago. Around the same time, there were also the office supply store “Easy Button” commercials. Man has often looked for ways to do things easier, faster, cheaper, etc.

That also spills into the church world, often in church growth or revitalization. Churches in decline are usually desperate for ways to see numerical or financial growth that are easy, fast, cheap, and so forth. And for good reason. Maybe the church is a few bad weeks from closing its doors or letting someone go. Shortcuts to a turnaround would be a blessing, but we probably all know from experience how shortcuts fall short of lasting change.

“I began using some of my pulpit time to encourage them to find someone ... to ask them how they could pray for them. And they did.”

—MATT HENSLEE



And they did. Reports started trickling in of opportunities members had to pray with a server at a restaurant, a coworker on a lunch break, a neighbor at the mailbox, and so forth. We would take the requests and pray for them during our weekly prayer meetings, and momentum began to build. Our members began conversing with people they may not usually mingle with—and lived to tell about it!

So, we took the next step. My mentor in the ministry, Matt Queen, has a simple evangelism strategy that anyone can do, which begins by asking, “Has anyone told you God loves you today?” Inevitably, the answer is no, at which point you can ask to be the first and say, “God loves you so much that He sent His one and only Son to live a perfect life for you, die a sacrificial death for you, rise victoriously for you, and save you if you turn to Him in faith. Would you like to

CROSSOVER

Join us for Crossover
Host Church Training at
Plymouth Park Baptist Church
1714 N Story Rd
Irving, TX 75061

Register at namb.net/crossover

En Español
Sábado, 1 de marzo
10:30AM-1:30PM

In English
Tuesday, March 25
10:30AM-1:30PM

hear more about that today?” If they do, go for it. If not, you leave them with a gospel tract, information about your church, or even your contact information if they have questions later.

I began sharing that strategy from the pulpit and during other teaching opportunities, and our people got after it. In fact, during Easter, one of our members went to the grocery store next to the church and asked the cashier if anyone had told her God loves



her, and the cashier said, “Actually, yes! Someone from that church (she pointed toward our building) was just here and told me, and I plan on coming this Sunday.” Story after story started coming in, and fast. I’d often share some of them from the pulpit with encouragement to keep up the good work.

By the end of the year, we were averaging almost 400 people in gathered worship and had seen over 80 decisions of some kind. Now, instead of starting with a handful of folks committing

to a big training and weekly visitation, we have hundreds of folks taking the gospel with them as they go, wherever they go, and God is blessing their faithfulness abundantly. This year, we’ll harness this momentum and mobilize a more organized or trained group of evangelizers, and we may very well live to place those doomsday projections into the dumpster where they belong.

Matt Henslee is lead pastor of Plymouth Park Baptist Church in Irving.

TOP Plymouth Park Baptist Church has experienced a revival through God’s grace and a renewed emphasis on sharing the gospel throughout the community.

BOTTOM A woman named Mary Ann (pictured second from left) smiles after being baptized at the church. She is seen with members of her family. **SUBMITTED PHOTOS**

A banner with a teal background featuring silhouettes of people. The text reads: "ANNIE ARMSTRONG EASTER OFFERING® FOR NORTH AMERICAN MISSIONS". At the bottom right is the North American Mission Board logo, which consists of three vertical bars of increasing height followed by the text "North American Mission Board".



First Year Free

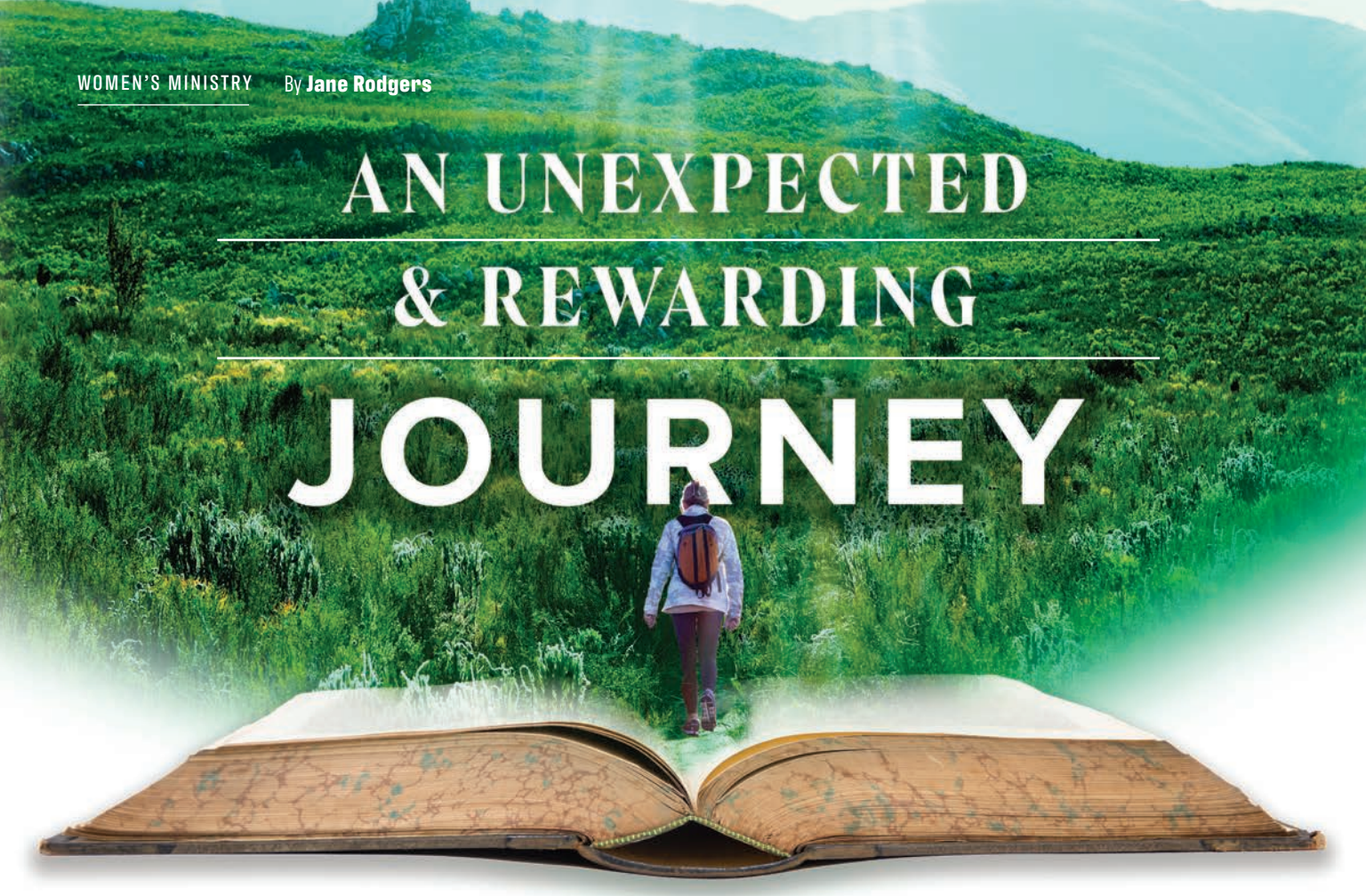
FOR THE CHURCH COHORTS

LEARN MORE.

mbts.edu/cohorts



AN UNEXPECTED & REWARDING JOURNEY



FBC New Braunfels member didn't intend to lead women's ministry, but God had other plans

NEW BRAUNFELS

When she learned that a bus crash had claimed the lives of 13 First Baptist New Braunfels senior adults returning from a Hill Country retreat in March 2017, Marcia Dean responded as she always had: She went to church.

The former financial secretary at FBC New Braunfels heard about the disaster through a friend's text. As Dean switched on the news, she told her husband, Charlie, "I don't know why, but I've got to go to church."

Dean and another former employee stepped in to help at the short-handed church office. Dean answered phones and provided support to members and staff.

"They've gone home," she told a journalist about the victims, a comment that resonates still.

Church has provided a this-side-of-heaven home for Dean since childhood.

An early call

Dean recalled sitting "on the piano side of the church" as her mother played while her father led worship at their church in tiny Haskell, Okla. One Sunday as her father led the singing during the invitation, Dean, almost 8, felt the call to go forward.

"God just really touched my heart and called me," she said, remembering leaving her mom at the piano and going straight to the pastor.

Her love of missions began in childhood, with involvement in Acteens and Girls in Action and contact with a family friend and missionary to Argentina serving with the Foreign Mission Board (now known as the International Mission Board). These early experiences would later motivate the adult Dean to take mission trips to Southeast Asia, Germany, and India.

Dean started college in Oklahoma, but when her father fell ill, she returned home to assist her mom in caring for



Pastor Brad McLean commended Marcia's faithful service as a teacher and leader and called her "an enthusiastic missionary" to "multiple countries." Charlie and Marcia Dean are pictured at left posing with their grandchildren.

SUBMITTED PHOTO



Connection Night

March 6 Lewisville

Lakeland Baptist Church

May 1 Lubbock

Indiana Avenue Baptist Church

August 7 Pflugerville

First Baptist Church

sbtexas.com/pastorwives

him. Dean's older brother also left the university to run the family hardware store until it could be sold.

"I crammed four years of college into seven," Dean said with a chuckle.

While a college student, she attended First Baptist Church in Moore, Okla. Her accounting major prepared her for a part-time job as a financial assistant at the church, the first of her staff positions at churches. Not only did she love that job, but Dean discovered another passion: the study of Scripture. She credits her pastors at FBC Moore and subsequent churches for inspiring her to dig into the Word of God.

The stint in Moore brought another bonus. Mutual friends introduced Marcia to Charlie Dean, then stationed at Tinker Air Force Base, and the two were married in 1980. As Charlie completed his 20 years of service in the Air Force, they lived in Iceland, Massachusetts, and Ohio before retiring to New Braunfels.

Dean began teaching young single adults at a small home mission church in Massachusetts. "I'm not sure how much they got out of it," Dean recalled. She did not see herself as a teacher.

God had other plans

In Ohio, Dean became involved with the Bible studies of Precept Ministries. Even though she was pregnant with her second child, she signed on for the fall semester and committed to doing the work. She toted her newborn daughter to class.

"I thought it was gonna eat my lunch," Dean said of the rigorous study. She has been a Precept studies teacher or student since 1986.

The in-depth study of God's Word for nearly 40 years "has changed my life," Dean said. "God has given me [opportunities] to impact and change other women's lives."

In Ohio, she attended Precept Ministries training for her own benefit. After relocating to New



April 10-12

Aquila

Latham Springs Camp
& Retreat Center

For senior pastor wives.

sbtexas.com/pastorwives

Braunfels, she joined the Precept group there. Shortly afterward, the leader moved out of town.

"I was the only one who had been trained," Dean said. She had already signed up for additional Precept training in San Antonio, so she reluctantly went.

At that San Antonio class, the leader told the group to turn to the person on their right and express their greatest concern so that person could pray for them.

"I am scared to death that I am going to have to lead my Precept Bible study this fall," Dean admitted.

"Oh honey, I have the gift of prayer," her new friend replied.

"I had turned to a gal who loved praying and who was faithfully going to pray," Dean mused. "I turned to the Lord and said, 'Oh Lord, I am in really big trouble now,'" she said.

Despite her reservations, she began teaching the studies, which moved to First Baptist in September 1993, stepping down for a few years

in the early 2000s before reassuming the role in 2008.

Women changed by the Word

Also in the 1990s, Dean became aware of women's ministries developing in other churches, something she had a desire to start at her own church. She became among the first to attend Southern Baptist Convention women's leadership training in Nashville.

With the pastor's support and blessing, Dean and a team, including some who had accompanied her to Nashville, began a women's ministry at the church. The ministry would not be event-driven but would focus on Bible study, discipleship, and prayer, Dean determined.

It flourished, from mentoring programs to book clubs to Bible studies.

"We began offering a variety of things," Dean said, adding that most women participated at some level.

Dean, who also spent 18 years as the church's financial secretary, had found her calling.

"I want to get [women] to understand that you can read a million books or do a devotional every single day, but if you don't get into the Word of God, your life will never change."

She refuses to accept excuses. "Don't ever say that you don't have time. You have time," she tells women she teaches. As a young mother with two small children at home and a husband who constantly traveled, she learned to get up early to work on her Bible study lessons before the kids woke up.

What's next for Dean? She is not through teaching yet, but with grandkids in North Carolina and Charlie retired for a second time, travel to visit family factors into the schedule.

At 68, she remembers her mother asking herself, "How did you get so old?" and remembers the answer: "One year at a time."

Dean knows how to make those years count.



WOMEN'S MINISTRY

Leadership SUMMIT

October 17-18

Houston

sbtexas.com/wmsummit

She Stands

WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

1 Corinthians 15:58

3.7-8 Lewisville

Lakeland Baptist Church

5.2-3 Lubbock

Indiana Avenue Baptist Church

8.8-9 Pflugerville

First Baptist Church

sbtexas.com/shestands

A portrait of Corey Paul, a man with a beard and short curly hair, wearing a tan button-down shirt, smiling against a teal background.

Q&A **FIVE MINUTES**

with Corey Paul

As the storytelling director of The West Church in Alief, **Corey Paul captures and shares stories of God's work** within the church and the community. His mission is to illuminate how the church seeks to transform lives by making disciples of Christ. A former Houston firefighter, Paul is married to Summer. The couple has two daughters, Journee and Amani.

What does a storytelling director for a church do?

My role revolves around capturing and conveying the heartbeat of our community through compelling narratives. This involves creating content that highlights God's work in and through His people, ensuring our stories inspire faith, hope, and action. I oversee initiatives like sermon production, social media strategy, and the West Creative Collective, where we translate biblical stories into hip-hop-inspired audio and visual experiences. My job is to ensure these stories resonate deeply, glorify God, and engage both our congregation and the Alief community.

What's one thing you'd like to see God do through your ministry this year?

I'd like to see the West Creative Collective fully flourish. A key goal is advancing our flagship [audio and visual] project: translating the Bible audio and visual experiences. By fostering community and providing resources, we aim to inspire culture with impactful faith-based content. I also aim to equip our team with systems and training to ensure the ministry runs smoothly and continues to grow.

What's one challenge you are facing in your ministry?

A key challenge is balancing creative innovation with operational efficiency across the entire media department. ... It's a constant effort to ensure everything runs smoothly while staying focused on our mission. At the same time, we're working to cultivate a culture of love and encouragement, ensuring that we come alongside God's people with grace and purpose rather than becoming overly systematic or transactional.

What's one thing you've learned in ministry or life you know you'll never forget?

Faithfulness to God's calling always outweighs immediate results. Ministry is a marathon, not a sprint, and trusting in God's timing is essential. Anytime I've submitted to God in obedience, I'm often unsure where He's leading me at first, but it always ends up far better than I could have imagined with my limited perspective. Perseverance, fueled by faith and the support of community, often leads to outcomes beyond what we envision.

How can SBTC churches be praying for you this year?

Pray for clarity, wisdom, and strength as I juggle multiple roles in ministry, family, and creativity. Pray for The West Church and the West Creative Collective, that we would continue to glorify God through our work and reach people effectively with the gospel. Specifically, pray for the Alief community we serve, that hearts would be transformed, needs met, and God's presence powerfully felt.

NEW YEAR, NEW LIFE

Emphasis on prayer, evangelism, discipleship spurs revitalization at growing rural church

PARADISE

When Shawn Brewer came in view of a call to pastor First Baptist Church in Paradise, about 40 miles northwest of Fort Worth, he preached to about 60 people that Sunday morning.

After accepting a call from the church, he was greeted by about half that number on his first Sunday due to various difficulties, including the COVID shutdown.

“The church was struggling,” Brewer remembers of that time. “They needed to decide if we were going to grow or are we going to exist.”

Brewer had pastored larger churches in Eastland and Lubbock prior to moving to Paradise. A health crisis in the family led him to step away from his leadership of a church in Lubbock. After that crisis passed, Shawn didn’t know what God had for his future.

“This is my fourth full-time church, but I didn’t really know if I’d be in ministry again,” Brewer recalls.

At the same time, FBC Paradise knew of Brewer through a church member, but also knew he’d led larger churches than theirs. Some of the pastor search

committee members doubted a pastor with Brewer’s resume could be drawn to a church one member called “beat up.”

After a short time in Paradise, the new pastor attended an associational meeting up the road in Decatur. One of his reasons for attending that day was to talk about prayer ministry—a keen interest of Brewer’s. Leaders of the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention’s Regenesi church revitalization initiative made presentations during that meeting. After listening to Anthony Svajda—pastoral ministries associate for the SBTC—talk about it, Brewer decided to explore the process with his church.

Church leadership agreed Regenesi would be a good idea, so Brewer formed a nine-person leadership team to help with the evaluation of its ministry. Svajda worked personally with the church.

“[Regenesi] helped us look at ourselves,” Brewer said. “It helped us examine why we do some of the things we do ... some things that needed to be improved or removed ... how we might be more efficient and effective at being the church that Christ wants us to be.”

The pastor led the church to implement a three-point emphasis on evangelism, discipleship, and prayer as it sought to have a more effective ministry. Since entering the process, the church has baptized four people, including three adult men—the first baptisms in a while for FBC Paradise.

Ren Young has been a member of the church for 38 years, ever since he and his wife married. He's seen a lot of ups and downs at the church. Young served as a member of the Regenesi leadership team and remembers some of the hard truths they discovered.

"We had to face a lot of things we were using for excuses for how stagnant we'd become," he said. "We had just stopped nurturing our members."

But Young sees a foundational change in the current ministry of the church.

"[Regenesi] helped us look at ourselves. It helped us examine why we do some of the things we do ... some things that needed to be improved or removed."

—SHAWN BREWER

"We're praying now," he said. "Shawn has been dynamic in leading us to be a praying church. We're more Spirit-led. Discipleship is one of the things I'll get really excited about as it grows in the church. The prayer ministry is one thing that has prepared us for [growth in discipleship]."

Brewer has trained more than 20 church members in discipleship, including becoming disciple-makers themselves. The three-part emphasis has begun to bear fruit.

"Our job is to be faithful," the pastor emphasized. "It's about being faithful to be the church where we are. If we do that and share the gospel, God will provide. We've had some real eye-opening experiences with people stepping up and saying, 'Hey, we can reach people!' and we have."



TOP Prayer has become a foundational aspect of First Baptist Church in Paradise's revitalization.

BOTTOM Shawn Brewer, pastor of FBC Paradise, is pictured with his wife, Lauri. **SUBMITTED PHOTOS**

REVITALIZATION

Attendance at FBC Paradise has grown since that first day four years ago. Average attendance for the fall months of 2024 was 130. By teaching the congregation prayer, discipleship, and evangelism, Brewer envisions the revitalization being experienced by the church spilling out into the town and region. His vision is to host 20 evangelistic events (block parties, Easter lunch, etc.) over the next three years.

“We’re seeing our people embrace that,” he added. “It’s not just the same people who work and participate. We’re actually looking for ways to interact with the [community] to see if God’s working to share the gospel.”

With his long perspective of the church’s life, Young noted a time when the church was missing some of the younger age groups that form a foundation for any congregation’s future. He recalls when his own kids were teenagers that there were almost no kids in the church’s student ministry. He’s excited to see that change over the past couple of years, experiencing an increased feeling of life in the church he’s served for decades.

“I can tell the church is growing,” he said. “You’ve got to look for a seat on Sunday, and I love it. It’s a little noisy ... we have a lot of kids and young people. It’s a joy to be at church!”



Delyn King (green shirt) and Amanda Sellards help with a fall fest hosted by FBC Paradise to engage their community. **SUBMITTED PHOTO**



regeneration ONE-DAY

REGIONAL • CONVENIENT • TRANSFORMATIVE

2.11 El Paso

2.18 College Station

3.25 Baytown

4.1 Crockett

4.1 in Palestine

4.8 Fort Worth

4.10 Glen Rose

4.22 Gonzales

4.29 Plano

5.6 McAllen

6.17 Cedar Park

regeneration
Interest Meeting

May 7 **ONLINE**

May 27 **ONLINE**

GUIDING CHURCHES TOWARD
HEALTH + RENEWAL

Register online at sbtexas.com/oneday





TEXAS
BAPTIST
COLLEGE

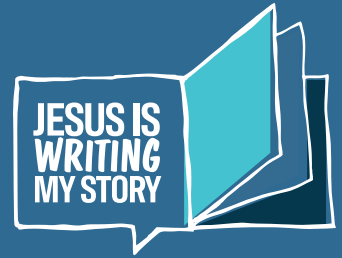
APRIL 4, 2025

PREVIEW DAY

At Texas Baptist College Preview Day, you'll discover what it's like to be a TBC student. Learn about our degree programs and scholarships, meet your professors, and even hang out with current students. This will be a day you don't want to miss.

Sign up for free at

[TEXASBAPTISTCOLLEGE.COM/PREVIEW](https://www.texasbaptistcollege.com/preview)



Even in grief, God has provided in more ways than I could ever imagine



My husband, Jerry, was in prison ministry in 2020. He loved the work and had actually been in some kind of prison ministry for decades. He was 70 when we moved to Amarillo to serve as a chaplain in the Clements unit, and then later in the medium security Neal unit. Of the 1,700 inmates in Neal, 1,000 of them got COVID in 2020. Jerry, who was asthmatic, also contracted the virus. They took him to the hospital from the unit and I never saw him again.

It was hard. It's still hard. But God provides. He's always provided for me.

I was saved Oct. 23, 1966.

I was in Sunday school, and they had children's church that was done by closed-circuit television. We could see the service from a room separate from

the main church. It was Central Baptist Church in Garland, and I was 11. I had a Sunday school teacher who would come and pick me up every Sunday. She came on Saturdays to ask my parents if I could go to church the next day, and whatever my mom and dad would say, that's what she would do.

One Sunday, I raised my hand that I did not know Jesus. She saw that and took me aside, went into one of the classrooms, and witnessed to me. I prayed and asked Christ to come into my heart. I can tell you now that I know that's when I got saved. I have never doubted that.

I was so excited. I ran home and told my mom, who was not at all enthusiastic about it. But I grew up going to church as much as I could. I think it was 58 years this past October that I got saved.

Years later, a lady named Gloria Brewster helped me grow as a Christian. Her husband was a pastor in Cedar Hill, and she helped me in so many ways to stay close to the Lord. She is still a really good friend.

I met Jerry at a little church in Mesquite we both attended. We sang in the choir together. Choir members were sitting in the sanctuary one Sunday, listening to an ensemble and waiting for our rehearsal. And all of a sudden, I heard this voice behind me saying, "Hello." I turned around and it was Jerry. We got to talking, and he was telling me about the ministry that he was just getting started into. A friend had helped him get into the city jail to talk to the inmates there. Jerry just fell in love with it and felt God's calling. We married in 1988.

Jerry still volunteered in prison ministry, but after a couple of years he was hired for that work by First Baptist Dallas. I was across the street working for the Baptist Credit Union. But in 2012, both of us had our jobs moved to part-time with no benefits. I started working for a retail chain and Jerry started looking for a job doing chaplaincy in the Texas prison system. We interviewed in a couple of places around the state before moving to Amarillo. I cried for the first five years, wanting to go back to Dallas with our friends. All my family was back there. We moved from a nice house to a two-bedroom apartment. My daughter moved in with us to help me. It was a big change.

After working at a couple of different jobs there in Amarillo, I applied at the prison as a file clerk and got the job. Then I became an employee



“I miss Jerry so much. ... But Jesus is the great provider.”

—JUDY BEDISON

Want to share a story of what God is doing in your life or your church?

Scan the QR code or email jlanson@sbtexas.com to tell us your story.



at the same prison where Jerry worked. Our schedules were very different, but he was able to have lunch with me sometimes. We bought a house here, very close to the prison. I can stand in the front yard and see the prison. I can see the lights through my window at night from the prison. In the summertime, I can sit on my back patio and hear the guys yelling back and forth at each other. But it is a very close commute. It really has been nice.

After we moved here, Jerry asked Alan Burkhalter [pastor, Chaparral Hills Baptist Church] if he minded if Jerry started a prayer ministry. Jerry was an avid believer in prayer. Alan agreed and we organized a ministry so that someone is in our prayer house praying for our pastor, our church service, our community, our city, our state, and our country while the service is going on.

We have several couples, and we have continued that ministry since Jerry passed four years ago.

I miss Jerry so much. He loved to play the piano and played in our church, our Sunday School class, and in our home. It took me a while to be able to sit in the music service at church after Jerry passed. But Jesus is the great provider. I had a job, friends, and money enough to live. Even at earlier times, God would provide for us during hard financial times.

I've learned to read God's Word ... to listen to Him, talk to Him. By the Holy Spirit's prompting, I've been able to share the gospel with people. The Spirit led me to talk to the girl who was selling us a disposal, and she accepted Christ right there in the store. She's a fine Christian lady now.

As you can see, God has provided for me in more ways than you can imagine.



INVEST IN CHURCH EXPANSION WHILE SAVING FOR THE FUTURE

4.10%
APY*

11-MONTH TERM

Promos Available Through 2-28-25



SBTEXASFOUNDATION.COM/CERTIFICATES

Call 844-351-8804 for additional questions. Open an account with as little as \$2,500. Promotional certificates will auto-renew for a 3-month term at the current yield unless the client provides other instructions before renewal. Certificate investments are available to a qualified class of Texas churches, ministries, and individuals.



INVESTED IN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



For Austin church with strong ties to seminary, giving to CP is receiving

AUSTIN

More than three dozen people from Acts Fellowship Church in Austin have gone to seminary, including 20 who have trained at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary—a testament to the vitality of a Cooperative Program partnership.

“Part of our CP dollars go to the support of our seminary institutions, and it’s a great way to take part in equipping the next generation of Christian leaders and to partake in the expansion of God’s kingdom,” said Charles Lee, pastor of the predominantly Asian American Acts Fellowship.

“As one of the smaller churches, we can have an even greater reach and impact for God’s kingdom as we take part in the Cooperative Program,” Lee said of Southern Baptists’ unified giving plan for national and international missions and ministry, which marks 100 years of effectiveness this year.

Acts Fellowship, with a Sunday attendance around 250, began as a church plant 20 years ago and ministers largely to the University of Texas at Austin. The church’s demographics are about 25% college students, roughly 25% single adults, 25% married, and 25% under the age of 18, Lee said.

“I really do believe that through the Cooperative Program we can do more together,” Lee, a Southwestern graduate, said. “I don’t think [churches] should function in isolation, but especially with a likeminded network of churches, unite for things greater than ourselves.

“It’s been a blessing to us to be able to participate in the Cooperative Program and also to take advantage of various gatherings that we have here in the state of Texas and to benefit from conferences and other opportunities that are made available to us.”

Acts Fellowship supports some missionaries directly but also prioritizes CP giving to partner with the International Mission Board and North American Mission Board “to take part even in areas that we may not be aware of,” Lee said.

“For us, I don’t think it’s one or the other. We can do both. We can take part in supporting specific individuals that we might know very well and believe in, and at the same time not neglect the greater kingdom work that we can also participate in through the institutions that we have set up,” he said.

The congregation offers several mission trip opportunities each year and subsidizes about 60% of the total cost. Each summer, they travel to Puerto Rico for a week to minister on a college campus and in some communities there. They travel to New Mexico to lead Vacation Bible School and door to door evangelism among Navajo Indians, and they send volunteers to Camp Blessing, a special needs ministry in Texas. So far, 20 people have signed up for summer mission trips this year, and the number is expected to double.

One of two associate pastors at Acts Fellowship is devoted to the college ministry, and the church offers small groups for college students in various locations, Lee said. They also take part in on-campus evangelism regularly.

“I really do believe that through the Cooperative Program we can do more together.” —CHARLES LEE

Acts Fellowship provides evangelism training, and people go out on a biweekly basis to share the gospel while supported by a prayer ministry.

Two ministry interns at the church were college students who sensed a call to the ministry and are enrolled at Southwestern, and another church member started at the seminary this semester, Lee said.

“It is our duty as a church to train up young people to serve in God’s kingdom, whether that be as volunteers or those who will eventually be called to the gospel ministry and be equipped in seminary and be able to lead churches. We need all of them,” he said.

“When you think about it, even Jesus—the way that I understand Scripture is that many of the disciples were around college-aged people. They were relatively young, and Jesus disciplined them to be movers and shakers for the movement called Christianity.”

Churches must invest in the next generation starting in the children’s ministry to make a difference for the kingdom, Lee said.

“It’s a lot of work. Sometimes it’s a lot more investing than counting returns because they are young, but nevertheless it is our mandate and duty to tell the good news to our children so they will tell it to their children and their children.”

The steady partnership available through the Cooperative Program undergirds the work of the local church visible at Acts Fellowship.

“We are definitely accountable to God in what we do as an individual church, but at the same time, I believe there is also another responsibility [to] work in cooperation with likeminded churches to be involved in greater things for the kingdom of God,” Lee said.

“I don’t think it’s ever a good idea to work in isolation. That’s true for individuals. No one should be a lone ranger Christian. They need the body of Christ. Even churches should never seek to be isolated by themselves.

“... Hopefully, that vision [of CP] will not diminish but escalate as we see our society drifting further away from God, that in those moments we realize that we need each other.”

3 ways to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Cooperative Program in 2025:



Pray for record CP giving

CP100 is an opportunity for record giving, acknowledging God’s favor upon our cooperative work. Many churches will mark this anniversary with increased giving. Consider how God is leading your church to give during CP’s anniversary year.



Plan a CP Sunday

CP Sunday is Oct. 5, 2025. Set aside this day as a church to emphasize the importance and impact of CP giving.



Post a CP100 Story

Post your story to share how God has used CP to bless your life. Use #cp100story when you post to your social channels.

sbtexas.com/cp



Mobilizing Churches | Multiplying Impact

sbtexas.com

Working together to ‘sow bountifully’



Each week, my inbox is filled with emails, but none capture my attention like the updates I receive from a family on the mission field sent out by our church. The almost weekly updates remind me of the expanded reach of our local body of believers. What an honor! I am so thankful for the Christ-followers and families that go as an extension of our church to be light in unfamiliar cultures.

This family left for Southeast Asia years ago and continues with determination and faithfulness for God’s glory and kingdom in a dark region of the world. They are ones with beautiful feet, and the Lord is using their lives powerfully. As they build relationships and share the gospel, they are seeing spiritual awakening. A region where generations before were hardened is now open to the good news of salvation and responding with faith in Christ.

We hear about their work of teaching them to observe all that Jesus has commanded as they steadily make disciples (Matthew 28:19). Churches are regularly being planted and impacting many lives with the gospel. All of these amazing things are taking place in the midst of increased persecution and difficulty. Just recently, hundreds of Bibles were confiscated by authorities as our enemy attempted to thwart God’s work.

This is a wonderful example of the Cooperative Program in action. This missionary family represents one path of a great journey that began many years ago. When we give through CP, we give to Christ-followers who have answered a sacrificial and beautiful call to go. We have the privilege of praying for these families laboring for the kingdom.

What’s your Cooperative Program story?

Post your story to your social channels and use #cp100story.

sbtexas.com/cp



The story of this amazing family is repeated over and over across Southern Baptist life. Thousands of missionaries have responded to God’s call, with more being sent each year. Churches are being planted across North America, providing consistent gospel proclamation. Seminaries are equipping men and women to live wholly for Christ—committed to the truth of Scripture and to lead the next generation of Jesus followers to global impact. Our state is equipping churches to plant new churches here in Texas, resourcing them to more effectively make disciples and serve others with the gospel. This is the Cooperative Program changing lives.

In 2 Corinthians 9:6, 10-11, Paul writes, “The point is this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. ... He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God.”

We have been enriched in this great state and nation. For 100 years, Southern Baptists have combined their efforts through CP to “sow bountifully.” Let us continue that legacy of generosity to bring glory to our Father in heaven and experience the eternal bounty of men and women made in the image of God becoming brothers and sisters through the cross of Jesus Christ. For His glory!



Josh Allen is lead pastor of Parkway Hills Baptist Church in Plano.

SBTC pastor's book on Spurgeon underscores the primacy of prayer

As he has mentored pastors at varying times over the past four decades, Keeney Dickenson said he has noticed something often missing from their sermon preparation—prayer.

It's a realization that spurred Dickenson, pastor of First Baptist Church in Crockett and prayer ministry specialist for the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention, to write his latest book, *Spurgeon: The Prayer-Powered Pulpit of the Prince of Preachers*. Gleaning examples from the life of Charles Spurgeon—the 19th century church leader known as the “Prince of Preachers”—Dickenson's book aims to encourage pastors to make prayer founda-

tional to their sermon preparation, ministries, and lives.

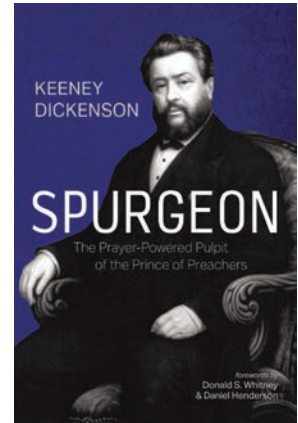
Dickenson said researching Spurgeon's life deepened his own desire for a Christ-centered life and ministry and underscored the biblical truth found in John 15:5 that apart from Jesus, we can do nothing.

“Spurgeon's desperate dependence upon God superabundantly compensated for any lack of formal theological training,” Dickenson said. “... If the pastor as shepherd becomes disoriented to the ways and the will of God, the flock he leads will quickly do the same. We have seen what we can do for God, but that is

nothing compared to what God can do through us.”

In endorsing the book, Tom J. Nettles, senior professor of historical theology at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, wrote, “This book relentlessly pursues the premise that the preacher must first and foremost be a man of God before he can be of any use to his people. He must be a God-saturated person in his personal life and must inject prayer into every phase of self-examination and sermon preparation if he is to be a vessel ‘unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the master's use’ (2 Timothy 2:21).”

Donald Whitney, professor of biblical spirituality at Midwestern Baptist Theo-



logical Seminary, wrote in his forward to the book, “[This book] is especially for those pastors who have a deep hunger to be godly men, to shepherd the flock of God faithfully, and to preach the Bible truthfully and in the power of the Holy Spirit.”

The book is being distributed through Dickenson's Prayeridigm Publishing label, as well as through other online booksellers.



Interim Pastor EQUIPPING

February 24 Irving
Empower Conference

July 25 Houston
First Baptist Church

October 27 Lubbock
Southcrest Baptist Church

sbtexas.com/interim

THE CHURCH HAS LEFT THE BUILDING



NORTH TEXAS CONGREGATION SEES GOSPEL FRUIT FROM PRACTICE OF HOLDING ONE SERVICE PER MONTH OUTSIDE ITS WALLS

GREENVILLE

Pastor Paul Faseler was driving to a staff meeting when he noticed workers setting up for a county fair. He knew they travel and work every Sunday in a new location, so he thought, “I bet they don’t ever get to worship.”

Faseler rounded up some volunteers from The Well Baptist Church in Greenville and they headed to the fairgrounds on Sunday morning with 100 breakfast tacos for the workers. Rain was pouring down, but they waded in with raincoats and umbrellas to knock on doors of workers’ trailers.

About 20 workers accepted the invitation to come to a small worship service inside the fairgrounds, and nine of them prayed to receive Christ, Faseler said, adding, “We just wanted to bless them, but God decided to show up that day.”

An impromptu gathering at the local fairgrounds was not a far stretch for the members of The Well because they have been accustomed for years to using the fourth Sunday of each month as a service day outside the walls of their normal worship location.

The practice began out of necessity when the young church plant met at a community center and worked around a car show that was already booked for the fourth Sunday of every month. After a while, the car show moved on but the practice of going outside the walls held.

When they called Faseler as pastor four years ago, church members wanted to make sure he would be on board with the tradition. He thought it was a good fit with his missions and evangelism priorities.

The Well works with FISH, which is the Hunt County Shared Ministries food pantry and other services. Church members fill blessing bags for homeless people, packing tuna, granola bars,

The Well Baptist Church in Greenville sought out county fair workers on a rainy Sunday morning to share the gospel and saw nine people pray to receive Christ.

(Opposite page) Service projects are a normal use of Sunday mornings once a month at The Well Baptist Church in Greenville.

SUBMITTED PHOTOS



“We’ve got lots of people who probably would say they’ve never been on a mission trip, but they don’t know that we put them on mission trips every month.”

—PAUL FASELER

In addition to the food pantry and door to door evangelism, The Well has partnered with a local pregnancy resource center in Greenville. The church also partners with three schools doing various projects such as landscaping or building bookshelves. They are prayer partners with the teachers at one school.

“We’ve got lots of people who probably would say they’ve never been on a mission trip, but they don’t know that we put them on mission trips every month,” Faseler said.

The Well has nearly a 100% volunteer rate in terms of how many members serve in some service capacity, the pastor said. “It really has empowered some folks and made them feel like a part of the body and having a purpose.”

One man who had worked a flat top grill at a restaurant for years told Faseler, “You want to cook breakfast tacos? I’m your man.” When such an emphasis is placed on service, more people are able to find where they fit.

With such an unconventional practice, the pastor points to the fruit as justification for the church’s off-site Sunday service once per month. “It takes some faith, and we have to talk it up a lot,” he said, adding that attendance is about 115 on worship Sundays but about 80 on service days.

“Some of it is just a choice of impact over numbers,” Faseler said.

fruit snacks, pudding, and water along with a gospel tract.

“We put those together every month. The Salvation Army takes some, a partner church takes some, our members take some,” Faseler said. “I like to keep one in my car at all times.”

Church members have been trained in the Three Circles evangelism method—one time using white paper table cloths so everyone around the table could practice drawing the circles and telling the gospel story. Sometimes on fourth Sundays they practice door to door evangelism.

“We’re always amazed when we do door to door on Sundays how many people are home,” Faseler said, noting that one of the challenges in the community is that so many people have prayed a prayer of salvation at some point but are not walking with Christ.

Recently, during a sermon from the book of Acts, Faseler preached on Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch, challenging people to trust God when He provides opportunities for gospel interaction. “We talked about how Philip just went with the question that was asked,” Faseler said.

OUTREACH

The pastor knows attendance will be down when they do door to door evangelism because fewer people are comfortable with that task. “But I think to have 40 or 50 people doing door to door is worth it. We could have 120 at church, but this could go a lot further if we really teach people how to do this.”

Often in Scripture, including Abraham and Mary, for example, God calls people to leave their comfort zones, Faseler said.

“We’re almost creating a culture where this is church for them. They expect to serve. They expect to have conversations with people and maybe have to share the gospel or ask people how they can pray with them and then pray.

“We’re constantly pushing our people out of their comfort zones to where they don’t even know they’re out of their comfort zones anymore. They’re just living on mission.”

All ages of The Well Baptist Church in Greenville are able to serve in projects such as painting picnic tables for a local school.

SUBMITTED PHOTO



VBS TRAINING

sbtexas.com/vbs

State Trainings

March 1 Spring
Spring Baptist Church

March 1 Austin
Anderson Mill Baptist Church

March 1 Marshall
Immanuel Baptist Church

March 29 Lubbock
Southcrest Baptist Church



Bible Drill

+ SPEAKERS TOURNAMENT

sbtexas.com/bibledrill

April 5 Regional
North Oaks Baptist Church, Spring

April 12 Regional
Cross City Church, Euless

April 26 Regional
Flint Baptist Church

May 3 State Finals
Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth



disability MINISTRY

SUNDAY

JULY 13

Making the gospel
accessible to everyone

sbtexas.com/disability-ministry





55+ Adults

MINISTRY TRAINING

COST
\$15

10AM - 2 PM
Includes Lunch

March 6 Abilene
Broadview Baptist Church

March 20 Grapevine
SBTC Office

September 4 Alvin
Heights Baptist Church

September 18 San Antonio
Park Hills Church

sbtexas.com/sradults



REACH

Europe

Pray • Learn • Go • Partner

sbtexas.com/europe



Church Positions

PASTOR

Maplecrest Baptist Church in Vidor is seeking a FT senior pastor for a congregation that averages 70-90 people on Sunday mornings. Parsonage provided. MBC is looking for a man with strong preaching/pastoral skills and who is a skilled disciple-maker. Please send your resume to the attention of MBC Pastor Search at maplecrestbc@outlook.com.

FBC Sherman is seeking a FT pastor. Sherman is expecting growth that will add 3,000+ new jobs to the community. If God is speaking to your heart, we want to hear from you. Send resume to searchteam@fbcsherman.org.

Kingwood First Baptist Church in suburban Houston is seeking a FT senior pastor to provide spiritual leadership and accountability for the congregation and staff and the overall leadership of the church and its ministries according to God's Word, church goals, and the bylaws of Kingwood FBC. Email resume to kfbcbsearch@gmail.com.

First Baptist Church Mobeetie is seeking a FT pastor. Send resumes to fbcmbobetiepastorsearch@yahoo.com.

College Baptist Church in Big Spring is seeking an immediate FT senior pastor. Interested candidates, please submit your resume to cbcsearch23@gmail.com. We began reviewing resumes in November 2024.

Wildwood Baptist Church in Village Mills is seeking a bivocational pastor with preaching experience, leadership ability, and a servant's heart. Sunday AM worship, Wednesday AM Bible study, PM team kid and youth ministry, etc. Send resume to P.O. Box 729, Village Mills, Texas 77663. Attn: Pulpit Committee, or email to wwbc-secretary@outlook.com.

Rochelle Baptist Church in Rochelle is seeking a FT pastor for their small, praying, and gospel-centered church to help them grow spiritually. Prefer expository preaching. Send resume to dbaker925@outlook.com.

Bethel Baptist Church in Appleby near Nacogdoches is seeking a bivocational pastor. Contact: Lois Ann Worsham, phone: 936-564-1602 (leave a message).

MUSIC

Wylie Baptist Church in Abilene seeks a FT associate pastor for worship. Blended worship with choir. Seminary education and 10+ years of experience preferred. Send resumes to lwest@wyliebaptist.org.

FBC Orangefield is seeking an energetic contemporary FT worship leader. We have a love for God, a passion for people, and our purpose is to make more and better disciples of Jesus Christ. Applications can be sent to applyfbcf@gmail.com.

Lake Church in Arlington is seeking a FT contemporary worship associate. Prior experience leading band and worship preferred. Send resume to Pam Mason at pmason@lakechurchdfw.org.

Calvary Baptist Church in Rosenberg is seeking a PT worship leader. Blended worship style. Some

musical training and ability to play an instrument are a plus but not required. Send resumes to church@calvaryrosenberg.org.

Frost Baptist Church in Frost is seeking a PT worship leader for Sundays and Wednesday evenings. We are mostly contemporary, using a praise team which includes a band. This person will also help the pastor with leadership to coordinate during holidays, weddings, funerals, and other special events. Contact us at frostbaptist@gmail.com.

Bethel Baptist Church in Tyler (Chapel Hill) is seeking a PT (\$30K) worship pastor. Bethel desires a music ministry with youthful energy & theological integrity through balanced, blended music. Email resume to associate pastor Stephen Sixtos at spsixtos@gmail.com.

Western Hills Baptist Church in Wichita Falls is seeking a PT bivocational worship pastor, to provide spiritual leadership for worship services through a blended worship on Sunday morning and Wednesday evening. Please send your resume to whbcwfresume@gmail.com.

STUDENTS

Glenview Baptist Church in Haltom City seeks a FT student minister to disciple 7th-12th graders and college students, lead dynamic ministry, build leaders, and integrate student ministry into the church's mission. Submit resumes to studentministersearch@glenviewchurch.org. Learn more about us at glenviewchurch.org.

Lakeview Baptist Church in Longview is seeking a FT youth/associate pastor. Possible parsonage. Send resume to secretary@lakeviewbc.org.

Flint Baptist Church in Flint is seeking a FT high school minister with a seminary degree and 5+ years of experience. Email resume to wricks@flintbc.net.

FBC Corinth is seeking a FT student pastor to provide leadership and direction in ministering to our students and parents. Email resume to info@fbccorinth.org.

FBC Hamshire is seeking a FT youth pastor for 6th-12th grade. Sunday service attendance averages 250 and youth group attendance averages 40-50. Seminary degree, as well as some ministerial experience, preferred. Send resume to Casey Hall at casey.hall@hexacontainment.com. Church office: 409-243-2163.

FBC Borger seeks a FT student pastor to be responsible for partnering with families in seeing 7th-12th grade students come to Christ, grow in conformity to the image of Christ, and form a biblical worldview. Email resume to Jonathan@firstborger.com.

Fellowship at Field Store in Waller is seeking a bivocational youth pastor to develop and maintain strategies to minister to 6th-12th grade students. Contact: Travis & Annie Jackson. Email resume to annieloujackson@hotmail.com. Church website is fellowshipatfieldstore.org.

Grace Baptist Church in Kilgore is seeking a PT or FT student pastor. Email resume to carl@gracebc.church.

CHILDREN

Lonesome Dove Baptist Church in Southlake is seeking a FT kids director. If you are interested, please email your resume to Josh Holcombe at youth@thedovechurch.com.

West Conroe Baptist in Conroe is seeking a FT children's minister. Visit vanderbloemen.com/job/west-conroe-baptist-childrens-minister for more information. Email resume to resumes@vanderbloemen.com.

High Pointe Church in McKinney is seeking FT children's pastor. Visit vanderbloemen.com/job/high-pointe-church-childrens-pastor for more information. Email resume to resumes@vanderbloemen.com.

Nassau Bay Baptist Church in Houston is seeking a PT director of pre-school and children's ministries. Applicants may send resumes or inquiries to office@nbbchurch.org or call 281-333-3844 for more information.

COMBINATION

LifePoint Church Lufkin is seeking a FT music/youth pastor who is God's man willing to grow with the church. Currently running in the 90s in morning worship. Services Sunday morning and Wednesday evening. Willing to consider part time. Contact pastor@lifepointch.org.

Central Baptist Church in Hillsboro is seeking a FT worship and discipleship minister. This will include choir, worship team, band, and overseeing other areas of music ministry. Discipleship will include helping coordinate and administrate Sunday school and discipleship ministries. Send resumes to pastord.beggs@gmail.com.

Lebanon Baptist Church in Frisco is seeking a FT associate pastor of youth and administration. Please send resumes to r.wilkins@lbcfrisco.com.

First Baptist Troy is seeking a combination of youth/music/family ministers. A combination of two would be considered FT. Contact: office@fbctroytx.org.

OTHER

Second Huntsville Church in Huntsville is seeking a FT college/life group pastor. Huntsville is home to Sam Houston State University. You can find us at SecondHuntsville.org. Email resume to Garrison.pastor@gmail.com.

Lake Church in Arlington is seeking a FT financial assistant. \$18-20 per hour. Two years grant writing and accounting required. Send resume to Oles at omironyuk@lakechurchdfw.org.

Second Baptist School in Houston is seeking a FT head of schools. For more information, visit vanderbloemen.com/job/second-baptist-school-head-of-schools. Email resume to resumes@vanderbloemen.com.



DISASTER RELIEF

ONLINE TRAINING

PREP • TRAIN • RESPOND

Online Courses

Online Intro to DR

A course for all new volunteers and those seeking to renew their credentials. Consists of three sections with videos & quizzes to complete.

Phase 1 Clean Up & Recovery

Learn how you can help disaster survivors with mudding out or cleaning their homes after floods and debris cleanup after tornados and wind events.

Phase 1 Mass Feeding

Train to be a mass feeding ministry volunteer to help prepare meals for survivors, first responders and other volunteers.



DISASTER RELIEF

PREP • TRAIN • RESPOND

2025 TRAINING DATES

Intro to DR + Phase 1 Training

March 1 Spring
Spring Baptist Church

April 5 Alvarado
First Baptist Church

“Some of the greatest servants in the kingdom of God are lay leaders who serve through disaster relief. Their heart to serve and share the gospel as an extension of their local church is both inspiring and contagious. I urge you to consider joining thousands of others in serving Christ in the midst of crisis.”

—NATHAN LORICK, SBTC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Made possible through Cooperative Program giving.

For more info & to register sbtexas.com/dr





4 common questions about pastors' kids

ON MARCH 9, 2016, an off-duty Jacksonville, Fla., police officer was taking his 14-year-old son to school when he decided to pull over a Cadillac that was driving erratically. The driver, Kevin Rojas, had just threatened his girlfriend with a gun and fired shots in their house before taking off in his car.

Rojas immediately opened fire, hitting the officer in the head, upper body, and hand. Meanwhile, the officer's brave son managed to call for help. Fortunately, Rojas was apprehended soon afterward and the deputy made a full recovery.

That unnamed father-officer had a tough decision to make when his work and family priorities collided that day. Those of us who are privileged to lead our homes and ministries often live with a similar tension.

Here are four common questions I get about parenting and pastoring:

1. Should I protect my kids from church conflict?

Pastors who believe they need to guard their children from major church problems are not wrong, but I want to suggest a caveat. If your children are teenagers, they likely have already heard about these problems, especially if they concern you. Consider starting a high-level conversation

that will help you discover what they know, as well as help you discern what they need to know. Is it better for them to hear the truth from you, or some jaded version of it from someone else?

2. How should I shepherd my kids at home?

Some believe there are only two types of ministry parents: those who lead in regular family devotions, and those who struggle with the challenges of parenting. My suggestion is to simply read short passages and pray with your young children before they go to bed. As they get older, make mealtime a more casual-yet-intentional discipleship opportunity.

When our kids were teenagers, it seemed the only time they opened up was when I was ready to go to bed. My wife Janet and I decided we would drop everything whenever our kids made even the smallest initiative toward conversation. As empty nesters, we still practice that today.

3. How often should we make our kids go to church?

The Bible teaches weekly worship, so Janet and I were inflexible about Sunday mornings, yet we did give them more freedom as they got older about Wednesdays. If you do make your kids go "every time the doors are open," make sure it is their interests which are being considered and not just your own.

4. How can I keep my kids from hating the church?

Do not go into pastor panic if your college-age kids leave the church or question their faith for a season. I suspect most are looking to make sure their beliefs are something they own and not just inherited.

Two-thirds of those who attended church regularly in high school dropped out for at least one year as a young adult, according to a 2019 Lifeway Research study. Janet and I often tell pastors and wives that most preachers' kids will go through a temporary season of rebellion.

A well-managed home (1 Timothy 3:4) should not be confused with parenting perfectionism. Make sure the grace you preach at church reflects the grace you practice at home—for yourself, as well as your kids.

Mark Dance is director of pastoral wellness for Guidestone Financial Resources.

WHAT'S UP NEXT?

2024 CALENDAR

For more information about SBTC events, visit sbtexas.com/events or scan the QR code



FEB. 24-25

Irving Convention Center

FEBRUARY

- 10** Evangelism Connections (online)
- 11** Regenis One-Day, El Paso
- 18** Regenis One-Day, College Station
- 21-22** Apoderados (Empower Spanish Session)
- 23** Asian Evangelism Conference
- 23** Empower Conference Student Rally
- 2/28-3/1** M3 WKND, Odessa



APRIL 10-12

Come Away Pastor Wives Retreat

APRIL

- 1** Make Disciples Like Jesus, Wichita Falls
- 1** Regenis One-Day Part 1, Crockett
- 1** Regenis One-Day Part 1, Palestine
- 5** Intro to DR & Phase 1 Training, Alvarado
- 8** Regenis One-Day Part 2, Fort Worth
- 8** Regénis One-Day (En Español), Fort Worth
- 10-12** Come Away Pastor Wives Retreat
- 10** Regenis One-Day Part 2, Glen Rose
- 22** Regenis One-Day Part 1, Gonzales
- 29** Regenis One-Day Part 2, Plano



MARCH 2-9

MARCH

- 1** VBS State Training, Marshall
- 1** VBS State Training, Spring
- 1** VBS State Training, Austin
- 1** Intro to DR & Phase 1 Training, Spring
- 1** Crossover Training, Dallas
- 6** 55+ Adults Ministry Training, Abilene
- 6-8** Mujeres Firmes/Cumbre de Liderazgo, DFW
- 6** Pastor Wives Connection Night, Lewisville
- 7-8** She Stands Women's Conference, Lewisville
- 20** 55+ Adults Ministry Training, DFW
- 25** Crossover Training, Dallas
- 25** Regenis One-Day Part 2, Baytown
- 26** Evangelism Connections (online)
- 29** VBS State Training, Lubbock
- 31** Make Disciples Like Jesus, Plano

Do you receive the

SOUTHERN BAPTIST
TEXAN DIGEST

in your inbox?

News and resources you care about delivered once a week

Scan the QR code or visit texan.digital/subscribe





EMPOWER

CONFERENCE

BREAKOUTS & SPECIAL GUESTS



Daniel Ritchie



Frank Turek



Fred Luter



Heiden Ratner



Kevin Jones



Marian Jordan Ellis



Shane Pruitt



Steve Gaines



FEB. 24-25, 2025

IRVING CONVENTION CENTER — sbtexas.com/empower