

River Ministry honors church_112403

November 21, 2003

Posted: 11/24/03

River Ministry honors church

By Teresa Young

Wayland Baptist University

LUBBOCK-Supporters of Texas Baptist River Ministry recognized a mission-minded church and heard a missions testimony during the annual River Ministry luncheon Nov. 10.

Principe de Paz Baptist Church in Juarez, Mexico, received the Elmin Howell Bell Award at the luncheon, held in connection with the Baptist General Convention of Texas annual session.

Organized as a mission of Gethsemani Baptist Church of Juarez 17 years ago, the church has continued the heritage by helping start additional churches in Mexico, including Puerta del Cielo Church in August 2002, Genesis Baptist Church in February 2003, Cristo el Pan de Vida Church in May 2003 and new ministries in two colonias along the border. New congregations are planned in three additional locations in the coming months.

Francisco Notario, who has served as pastor since the church's beginning, accepted the award on behalf of the congregation.

"We are happy as a church to be given account for this award," Notario

said. "We are not doing anything extraordinary, just working for the Lord."

Guests also heard testimony from Nicole Haynes, a student at West Texas A&M University, who spent her summer in San Benito as a missionary. In work at New Horizon Church, she headed the children's ministry and started a youth group.

"I went there wanting God to bless those people through me, but God used those people to bless me," Haynes said. "I was humbled by the Lord, and he taught me many things."

Haynes expressed a common frustration in mission work- seeing so much need and not having resources to help all who have need. She said God taught her at San Benito to be obedient to love others and help those whom she was able to help.

Jorge Zapata, director of the River Ministry partnership with Buckner Baptist Benevolences, spoke about the effort to serve colonias, areas of high poverty on the Texas side of the border. Zapata reported 43 teams had visited the region from Baptist churches around Texas and had helped do home repairs, medical missions and met other physical needs.

River Ministry director Dexton Shores also reported success with the first Congreso de la Frontera, a worship and conference retreat held in Piedras Negras, Mexico, for pastors and their wives. More than 500 participants attended.

News of religion, faith, missions, Bible study and Christian ministry among Texas Baptist churches, in the BGCT, the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) and around the world.