

Road to youth evangelism ministry passed through rural Texas paths_111003

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By Leann Callaway

Special to the Standard

GRAND PRAIRIE—After graduating from Texas Tech University, Keith Roberson was eager to sink his teeth into ministry. Instead, he found himself delivering dental products all over the Texas Panhandle.

“I drove an 11-hour route, three times a week, delivering teeth to the greater Panhandle of Texas,” he said. “But it was a most humbling year and God-ordained. I had hours alone in a car to pray, listen, worship and learn about waiting on Jesus. I learned more about God's definition of success, ministry and servanthood that year than I could have ever possibly imagined.”

Roberson knew he was called to vocational ministry, but he also believed God wanted him to stay in Lubbock after graduation. The problem was, he had no vocational ministry opportunities and no immediate options for theological education.

The time of waiting became a time of preparation.



Youth evangelist Keith Roberson (center), shown with his brother, Craig Roberson, and recording artist Shane Barnard, works through Texas-based Waiting Room Ministries. Roberson is among a growing number of youth evangelists, youth motivational speakers and youth worship leaders used by churches for camps and special events. These itinerant youth workers represent yet another way youth ministry is changing today.

Eventually, he began serving in a college ministry in Lubbock, where he

worked for two years as college pastor. Then he joined with Waiting Room Ministries, which is based in Grand Prairie.

The 25-year-old Lubbock native now draws upon his experience in prayer, patience and perseverance as he speaks to youth across the country.

He describes a “burning desire to see students fall passionately in love with Jesus Christ.”

“I work with Waiting Room Ministries to spread a passion for the beauty and majesty of Jesus Christ,” he said. “I do that primarily by traveling and speaking to students ranging from junior high to college.”

He draws upon his own experiences as a way to be relevant to his audience, he said. “I never preach about something unless I have in some way experienced it, felt it or wrestled with it. Students are desperately looking for something real.

“One of the greatest things about working with students is that they are so often uninhibited in their worship,” he added. “This worship is where God's beauty is most exhibited to me. Watching students in genuine worship is so refreshing and always challenging.”

Through Waiting Room Ministries, he works with recording artists Shane Everett and Shane Barnard, who has been a friend since ninth grade. Roberson's brother, Craig, also is the worship band's manager.

These friends and Matt Chandler, pastor of Highland Village First Baptist Church in Lewisville, have profoundly influenced his ministry, Roberson said.

Now, Roberson really is sinking his teeth into ministry, with recent speaking engagements at places like Texas Tech, Dallas Baptist University, Baptist youth camps and Hawaii Baptist Academy.

“I love talking about Jesus,” he said. “When I speak in front of students, I feel like I'm busting at the seams inside. When someone is speaking with passion and conviction, I think people perk up. We want to feel and experience something real. When people see that from the pulpit, I think it stirs them to long for that same passion. We give passions to so many things. I just aim to direct those passions to the only place that will fully satisfy that inner craving.”

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