

TOGETHER: Prayer for things that are, ought to be_22105

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Her name is Emma Rose Gaston. She is the baby daughter of our baby daughter, and she's beautiful. We have three granddaughters and seven grandsons. Truly blessed.

One week earlier, my wife, Rosemary, and I awaited her heart cath procedure. Three stents and a prayer. Will bypass surgery be necessary? No. Truly blessed.

Life is like that. Full of fear, filled with joy. God promises to be present. Truly grateful.

Late at night, I returned a call from a pastor. "How is our convention going to be relevant to the needs of churches like mine? I don't really believe this church can survive. Two of your staff have been here. They are really good, but they didn't help us find a way to turn this church around."

I know those two staff leaders and they have helped many churches, but they didn't connect there. The only people sadder about that than the pastor and I are those consultants. Can we learn how to do what we do better? Did we listen well enough? Were we determined to follow up long enough?



Executive Director
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How do we fulfill our mission to encourage, facilitate and connect churches to fulfill God's mission of reconciling the world to himself-and build a better Sunday school, find a mission vision, equip stronger leaders and pay the bills? Determination. We will not be satisfied until we know how to work with and help every kind of church.

News arrived about a church start. Over 200 adults with boatloads of children in one of our most creative church starts. A high-risk, potentially high-yield congregation, and they finally are on their way! Thanks be to God.

Two young pastors, both gifted and called. One going through the dark night of despair and the other overwhelmed by the success of his new church. Both in my prayers. Both special to God and to the work of our convention. All the time, God is good.

A DVD is available with mission stories from our BGCT churches. Are our churches really doing this much in mission efforts all across Texas, in Mexico, in Eastern Europe, in Southeast Asia's tsunami district? No wonder our people have given almost \$1 million in the last six weeks to help the people there.

What an encouragement for churches that could show slices of this to their people. Now, that would get the mission fires burning!

Amazement every time I think about the impact our 23 Texas Baptist universities, seminaries, child care ministries, elder care services and hospitals make on Texans and on people in many parts of the earth. I've never known a more dedicated group of institutional leaders who want to help their ministries make a difference in people's lives and involve our churches in real, hands-on learning and serving experiences. The folks who work in these institutions are ready to help your church gain a bigger vision of what God can do through your people.

Thank you, Lord, for the Baptist Standard and all who serve you and your people by making sure our people are well informed, spiritually challenged and faithfully enlisted in the work of the kingdom. We have been given a special trust. Lord, make us faithful.

In the morning, as I walk my three miles, I'll be singing and quoting Scripture: "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name!"

We are loved.

- ◆ Order this free DVD by e-mailing rand.jenkins@bgct.org.

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.