

# All-State Choir & Band trip to Germany still on

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## All-State Choir & Band trip to Germany still on

**By Ken Camp**

*Managing Editor*

In spite of budget reductions and cutbacks in the Baptist General Convention of Texas Executive Board staff, the scheduled Texas Baptist All-State Choir and Band's Mission: Germany trip next summer will proceed as planned, organizers have announced.

The Texas Baptist All-State musicians had been invited to participate in the Baptist World Youth Congress in Leipzig, Germany, and perform at several venues in Berlin and Wittenberg.

**International  
Baptist  
Church  
in Berlin**

Contributions to help lower the cost of the trip may be sent to either the Texas Baptist Missions Foundation at 333 N. Washington, Dallas 75246-1798 or directly to the BGCT Music and Worship Team at the same address.

“One of the concerts will be in the International Baptist Church in Berlin, where the minister of music is one of our own alumni, Paul Rogers, who graduated in 1992,” said Tim Studstill, BGCT director of music and worship.

Students will spend July 22-27 on the Dallas Baptist University campus, learning music and preparing for the mission trip. They will leave for Germany July 28 and return to Dallas Aug. 5.

The future of Texas Baptist All-State came into doubt when Debbie Smith, music and worship projects coordinator, was named among the 29 full-time BGCT Executive Board staff included in a recent round of layoffs.

When members of the Texas Baptist All-State advisory council learned her

position had been eliminated, they called an emergency meeting, and the group agreed to press on with the trip to Germany.

“We felt like we heard God say, ‘Go,’” said Stephen Holcomb of DBU, choral conductor for Texas Baptist All-State.

Now, he said, music leaders are trusting God will provide the finances to allow Texas Baptist All-State to continue.

“The council felt strongly that we need to continue with Mission: Germany,” Studstill said. “The 32-year history of Baptist All-State needs to continue because of the value it adds to the lives of our students and to Texas Baptist congregations.”

Holcomb agreed, characterizing Texas Baptist All-State as an investment in the future of church music in the state.

Although all the details have not been finalized, Studstill has made arrangements to engage Smith on a contract basis as Baptist All-State coordinator.

“This will allow for a seamless, and virtually unnoticeable, shift in administration of this ministry,” he said. “The unfortunate aspect is that we will be working now not only to raise funds to help with mission scholarships for our students, but we will be raising funds to help fund Debbie’s contract salary.”

Texas Baptist All-State received two sizeable donations (\$25,000 and \$10,000) for Mission: Germany, as well as smaller contributions through the Texas Baptist Missions Foundation, Studstill noted.

Even so, leaders recognize the current estimated cost for each participant—\$3,400—limits participation, and they are continuing to seek donations to provide scholarships.

“We know it’s a huge hurdle,” said Derrel Thompson, an advisory council member and minister of music and education at Valley Grove Baptist Church in Stephenville. “Still, we felt like we need to press forward with it and trust God to provide.”

Contributions to help lower the cost per participant can be sent either to the Texas Baptist Missions Foundation, designated “All-State Mission: Germany Fund,” at 333 N. Washington, Dallas 75246-1798 or directly to the BGCT Music and Worship Team at the same address.

The deadline for auditioning for either All-State Choir or All-State Band is Nov. 15. Registration forms, audition information and general information about the mission trip are available at [www.bgct.org/allstate](http://www.bgct.org/allstate). For more information, e-mail [debbie.smith@bgct.org](mailto:debbie.smith@bgct.org) or call (214) 828-5237.