

# More than 100 profess faith in Christ during CityReach

November 2, 2007

Posted: 11/02/07

A child plays in an inflatable obstacle course during a block party sponsored by City Church of Amarillo. (Photo by John Hall/BGCT)

## More than 100 profess faith in Christ during CityReach

**By John Hall**

*Texas Baptists Communications*

AMARILLO—While children ran around, bounced in inflatable castles, played basketball, tossed Frisbees and scaled a climbing wall, a young man

across the street quietly smiled as he received The Gift.

That's the name of the Bible translation a volunteer from CityChurch of Amarillo gave him as he heard the Christian plan of salvation. The pair closed their eyes in prayer, and then they embraced in celebration of a new life in Christ.



A CityChurch of Amarillo volunteer shares the gospel with a block party participant during CityReach, an evangelistic emphasis held in conjunction with the Baptist General Convention of Texas annual meeting. (BGCT Photo/John Hall)

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## **Missions take forefront among**

# ministry awards recipients

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## Missions take forefront among ministry awards recipients

**By Marv Knox & Ken Camp**

*Editor & Managing Editor*

AMARILLO—Passion for missions provided the theme of the 2007 Texas Baptist Ministry Awards, presented during the Baptist General Convention of Texas annual meeting in Amarillo.

Elmin Howell accepted the W. Winfred Moore Award for lifetime ministry achievement. Cindy and Dennis Wiles took the George W. Truett Award for ministerial excellence. And Dick Hurst—who was unable to attend—was named the recipient of the Marie Mathis Award for lay ministry.

	
Cindy and Dennis Wiles	Elmin Howell

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# **WMU board discusses transition period, plans to select interim executive director**

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## **WMU board discusses transition period, plans to select interim executive director**

**By Teresa Young**

*Wayland Baptist University*

AMARILLO —The Woman’s Missionary Union of Texas board of directors may have started their meeting with uneasiness about the future, but they ended on a positive note about ongoing missions work around the state—and the hope of having an interim executive director-treasurer for the missions organization in place by December.

The board began its business session with words of encouragement from a Baptist General Convention of Texas representative and Texas WMU President Nelda Taylor concerning the Oct. 16 resignation of Texas WMU Executive Director-Treasurer Carolyn Porterfield.

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# WMU annual meeting features theme of 'shaping' for God's purpose

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Sudanese Women on Mission lead worship and praise at the Texas WMU annual meeting.  
(PHOTO/Eric Guel)

## WMU annual meeting features theme of 'shaping' for God's purpose

**By Teresa Young**

*Wayland Baptist University*

MARILLO—With a backdrop of terracotta and colorful glazed pottery,

Woman's Missionary Union of Texas celebrated another year of missions endeavors during its annual meeting, held in conjunction with the Baptist General Con-vention of Texas in Amarillo.

Centered on the theme "Shaped for His Purpose," the 127th annual meeting featured testimonies that showed individuals being shaped to do God's work and how that work is being carried out in around the world.



Texas WMU officers elected at the missions organization's annual meeting are (front) Nelda Taylor of Gonzales, president; (left to right) Suzy Wall of Canyon, second vice president; Anna Zimmer of Kingwood, recording secretary; Frankie Harvey of Nacogdoches, first vice president; and Jo Lee of San Antonio, third vice president.

(PHOTO/Eric Guel)

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# **Wade recounts struggles, strides in his tenure as BGCT executive director**

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Surrounded by family, Charles Wade prepares to deliver his final report to the Baptist General Convention of Texas as executive director. He will retire Jan. 31, 2008.

(PHOTO/Robert Rogers/Baylor University)

## **Wade recounts struggles, strides in his**

# tenure as BGCT executive director

**By Analiz Gonzalez**

*Buckner International*

MARILLO—In his final executive director's report to the Baptist General Convention of Texas, Charles Wade reviewed his time in that role, saying he would have handled some things a bit differently, but he insisted he essentially would have made the same decisions.

"We have been through a lot of change in our staff assignments. ... I really thought we could get through the change and to a new synergy within two years. It has been more like four years," he acknowledged.

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**Future of Texas Baptist  
missions depends on education,  
collaborations &  
communication**

November 2, 2007

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# **Future of Texas Baptist missions depends on education, collaborations & communication**

**By Teresa Young**

*Wayland Baptist University*

MARILLO—Future mission work by Texas Baptists will require a concerted effort in missions education, collaboration and communication to be successful, said a panel of Baptist General Convention of Texas representatives during a workshop held as part of the BGCT annual meeting.

Don Sewell, executive liaison for missions relations with the BGCT, began the workshop with a video detailing the partnerships and mission work already going on around the state and introduced a new BGCT website designed to connect missions efforts.

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## **Warren challenges BGCT to promote PEACE globally**

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California  
megachurch  
pastor and  
best-selling  
author Rick  
Warren  
challenges  
Texas  
Baptists to  
join his  
PEACE plan  
to make an  
impact on  
global  
problems.

## **Warren challenges BGCT to promote PEACE globally**

**By Teresa Young**

*Wayland Baptist University*

MARILLO—Developing a heart for missions can be simple, best-selling author and California pastor Rick Warren told Texas Baptists.

“If you want the blessing of God in your life, the power of God in your life, the anointing of God in your life and ministry, you must care about what God cares about most and get on God’s agenda,” Warren said to the Baptist General Convention of Texas annual meeting. “God’s agenda is the kingdom of God. It was the most pre-eminent thing on Jesus’ mind.”

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# Currie: If Texas Baptists ‘build it, they will come’

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## Currie: If Texas Baptists ‘build it, they will come’

**By Ken Camp**

*Managing Editor*

AMARILLO—If Texas Baptists move forward with a bold vision, other mainstream Baptists around the country will embrace the dream, Texas Baptists Committed Executive Director David Currie said.

Drawing from a line in Field of Dreams, Currie told a meeting of the moderate Baptist political organization, “If you build it, they will come.”

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## ‘See yourselves as sons and

# daughters of God,â Amarillo pastor urges Texas Baptists

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## ‘See yourselves as sons and daughters of God,’ Amarillo pastor urges Texas Baptists

**By Teresa Young**

*Wayland Baptist University*

AMARILLO—Texas Baptists have much to be proud of because their identity as adopted children of God, Howard Batson, pastor of First Baptist Church in Amarillo, said in the annual sermon at the Baptist General Convention of Texas meeting.

“Texas Baptists, as the adopted sons and daughters of God, go forth to work for the kingdom, knowing not only who you are but also whose you are,” Batson said. “You are his sons and daughters.”

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Howard  
Batson,  
pastor of  
First  
Baptist  
Church in  
Amarillo,  
brings the  
annual  
convention  
sermon at  
the Baptist  
General  
Convention  
of Texas  
meeting in  
Amarillo.

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# **BGCT president urges Texas Baptists to seek the lost, feed the flocks**

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BGCT  
President Steve  
Vernon urges  
Texas Baptists  
to follow  
Christ's  
command to  
seek the lost  
and feed the  
sheep.  
(PHOTO/Robert  
Rogers/Baylor  
University)

## **BGCT president urges Texas Baptists to seek the lost, feed the flocks**

**By Analiz González**

*Buckner International*

AMARILLO—With references to Jesus' parables about a lost coin, a lost sheep and a lost boy in Luke 15, Steve Vernon urged participants at the Baptist General Convention of Texas annual meeting to follow Christ's command to seek the lost and feed the sheep.

In his presidential message to the convention, Vernon recalled a time when his 4-year-old daughter walked off in a mall. She was only gone five minutes, but it gave him a glimpse into what God feels for those who don't follow him.

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# Around the State

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## Around the State

- **The Baylor University School of Social Work** will host a summit Nov. 8-11 to explore collaborations between Texas and international entities providing services to orphanages, the homeless, street children and victims of human trafficking in the Republic of Moldova. For more information, call (254) 710-6230.
- **Shane & Shane and Bebo Norman** will perform in concert at the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor at 7 p.m. Nov. 9. Tickets are free for students and \$10 for others. For more information, call (254) 295-5150.
- **Valley Baptist Health System** will sponsor a seminar addressing child abuse prevention, intervention and investigation in the Rio Grande Valley—including children being victimized through Internet pornography—Nov. 9-10 at the Radisson Resort on South Padre Island. Continuing education credit will be available for nurses, social workers, law enforcement personnel and attorneys. For more information and registration fees, call (956) 389-4702.
- **The University of Mary Hardin-Baylor** Church Relations department and Bell Association will hold a free seminar titled “Hitting Your Target or Missing Your Market” Nov. 10.

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# **African-American Texas Baptists gather for worship, praise**

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## **African-American Texas Baptists gather for worship, praise**

**By Dave Coffield**

*Hardin-Simmons University*

AMARILLO—Celebration and worship were at the forefront as hundreds of African-American Texas Baptists gathered at St. John Baptist Church of Amarillo on the eve of the Baptist General Convention of Texas annual meeting.

Pastor Grover Neal spoke of the purpose and accomplishments of the African American Fellowship of Texas.

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Michael Evans,  
pastor of  
Bethlehem  
Baptist Church  
in Mansfield,  
preaches at a  
rally for African-  
American Texas  
Baptists in  
Amarillo.  
(PHOTO/Robert  
Rogers/Baylor  
University)