

Around the State

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Community North Church in McKinney has broken ground on a multi-use building. It will be the first phase of a four-phase building plan. The two-story stone-exterior structure will include both worship and fellowship hall space and will feature stained glass. Offices and classrooms also are included.

Participating in the groundbreaking from left were Blanca Garcia, Don Hild, Mabel Lois Rutledge, Will Alexander, Burton Douglas, Larry Vowell of Collin Association, Rick Ballard of Collin Association, Pastor Bruce Austin, Ed Bratton, Linda Young and Barbara Francis.

Around the State

- **Brian Carter** has been presented the Douglas MacArthur Freedom Medal by Howard Payne University. The medal is awarded to individuals for their role in preserving Judeo-Christian values, Western heritage and the free enterprise system. Carter, a graduate of HPU's Academy of Freedom program, was chosen to receive the award in honor of his service in the Marine Corps, including a recent tour of duty in Iraq, according to Justin Murphy, director of the Academy of Freedom.
 - **The Baylor Board of Regents** has approved formation of the Baylor Advanced Research Institute. It will provide faculty with industrially funded research opportunities, student internships and graduate faculty funding to meet the scientific challenges of the future. The institute's goal is to narrow the gap between discoveries in Baylor's research laboratories and their practical application in industry.
 - **Dallas Baptist University** has announced additions to its faculty. Included are Joe Cook, assistant professor of counseling; Scott Jeffries, assistant professor of library science and reference librarian; Caia McCullar, professor of music; Amie Sarker, assistant professor of education; and Stephen Stookey, professor of Christian history and leadership studies.
 - **Ted Barnes** has been named dean of the College of Visual and Performing Arts at the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor.
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Book Reviews

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Book Reviews

[Sitting Strong: Wrestling with the Ornerly God](#) by Jeanie Miley (Smyth & Helwys)

Like Job, Jeanie Miley is acquainted with heart-wrenching grief. And like Job, her book offers the fortitude to “sit strong” in pain. That’s a far cry—and, frankly, a more realistic option—than “being strong.” This book is a guide for being able to “simply sit with your suffering, wrestling with it, arguing with God, and letting the old die so that the new can be born.”

With healing, renewing candor, Miley lauds an honest-with-God confrontation of life’s hardships. Rather than deny or denigrate them, she shows how to hold fast to God in the abyss of their pain. She teaches how to listen for the whisper of God’s grace even as the storms of life howl about.

Off the Bookshelf
What's everyone reading anyway?

What are you reading that other Texas Baptists would find helpful? Send suggestions and reviews to books@baptiststandard.com.

Sitting Strong not only confronts the mind with its forthright acknowledgement of pain, evil and suffering, but it also soothes the heart. The straightforward prose of each chapter presses onward in exploration, while the original poetry that concludes them reaches beyond thoughtful analysis to salve the soul.

Baptist Briefs

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Baptist Briefs

Accrediting association reprimands Criswell College. A Bible college with close ties to the Southern Baptist fundamentalist movement is in danger of losing its accreditation due to financial problems. The [Southern Association of Colleges and Schools](#) announced it has placed [Criswell College](#) on a one-year probation period for failure to comply with standards regarding financial stability and control of finances. The Dallas-based school's finances have been under scrutiny by the accrediting agency for two years. While the association's statement indicates Criswell displayed enough progress on "noncompliance" with SACS financial standards to prevent a complete withdrawal of accreditation, those advances apparently were not enough to return it to good standing with the association. SACS rules require it either to regain good standing after the two-year study period, continue accreditation but in a probationary period, or have its accreditation revoked entirely. SACS officials said they would continue studying the school's finances and make another determination on

Criswell's status in June 2008.



Gushee migrates to Mercer. Ethicist and author [David Gushee](#) has been appointed distinguished university professor of Christian ethics at [Mercer University](#). Gushee currently serves as a university fellow, Graves Professor of moral philosophy and senior fellow of the Carl F.H. Henry Center for Christian Leadership at Union University in Jackson, Tenn. At Mercer, he will be based in the James and Carolyn McAfee School of Theology in Atlanta and is expected to teach interdisciplinary ethics courses throughout the university. Gushee is a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of the College of William and Mary, where he earned an undergraduate degree. He received the master of divinity degree from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and earned a master of philosophy degree and a doctorate in Christian ethics from Union Theological Seminary in New York. Gushee is a columnist for Christianity Today and Associated Baptist Press, and he has written or edited nine books. Gushee, an ordained Baptist minister, is married to Jeanie, a homemaker, poet and nurse. They have four children: Holly, David, Marie, and Madeleine.

BWA creates young leaders network

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BWA creates young leaders network

By John Hall

Texas Baptist Communications

The [Baptist World Alliance](#) has started a network of young people in an effort to develop its next generation of leaders.

More than 30 young leaders from around the world gathered before the BWA's General Council meeting held recently in Ghana. They met one another and discussed issues they are facing.

Dallas Cowboy's son & other youth score at Camp Exalted

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Dallas Cowboy's son & other youth score at Camp Exalted

By Barbara Bedrick

Texas Baptist Communications

AN MARCOS—Snagging gummy worms immersed in a paper plate full of vanilla and chocolate pudding is not exactly what Eugene Lockhart

expected to be doing recently. He had anticipated being on the field at Texas Stadium with his dad, who was leading a Big Brothers Big Sisters of North Texas fundraiser.

Instead, Lockhart joined nearly 250 middle school and high school students and college freshmen for [Camp Exalted](#) July 16-20 at [San Marcos Baptist Academy](#).

Eugene Lockhart

2nd Opinion: Great news at a glad reunion

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2nd Opinion: Great news at a glad reunion

By Brad Riza

They all are older now, and most are larger around the middle. Some have less hair, and everyone's hair is a little lighter than it was then. Still, they made their way to Hideaway, near Tyler, this summer for an unusual military reunion. They weren't all from the same military unit, not even from the same branch of the service. They were Marines, Air Force, Army

and Navy. Some were postal workers, and others were fighter pilots and airlift specialists. Some were police and others chaplains. They weren't even in Vietnam at the same time. The only thing these people had in common was a connection with [Trinity Baptist Church in Saigon](#).

In the early '60s, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board endorsed Jim and Mary Humphries to go to Vietnam and pastor an English-speaking church in downtown Saigon. That was their mission—but they did way more than that! They worked with military and embassy personnel for sure, but they also reached out to many Vietnamese families, sharing their friendship and eventually the gospel. They trained and mentored Vietnamese who would be future pastors and leaders.

On a Friday night in July, many of those whose lives were touched by Jim and Mary traveled to their home just like they used to do on Friday nights in Vietnam. And just like in Vietnam, they had a great meal and a wonderful fellowship time. They met others who had been a part of that congregation at a different time. They spoke of ministry and worship and communion. They recalled working with orphans. They sang together, just as they did almost four decades ago.

No one spoke of politics. They did not debate the propriety of the war. They simply celebrated the opportunity to share ministry during a year that they were there—a year they were away from their families when they found a church family to fill that void.

Discipleship: It's all about the basics

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Discipleship: It's all about the basics

By Rebekah Hardage

Communications Intern

GARLAND—Ron and Cindy Blevins believe teenagers learn the importance of a daily walk with God the same way they learn core subjects at school.

“It’s like a math class. You’ve got to have the basics first,” Blevins explained. The Blevinses have written a youth discipleship program, [Course for Life](#), that focuses on the basics—memorizing Scripture, daily quiet time and mission projects that help the students make their relationship with God a priority.

DOWN HOME: OK, who's the owner here?

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DOWN HOME: OK, who's the owner here?

I'm not sure whether Joanna and I own our home, or this house owns us.

(OK, technically, the bank owns our home. But we're paying down, and if we live to be old enough, we'll hold the title. Don't get hung up on the details here.)

Not quite a year ago, we sold the home where we raised our daughters. I loved that place. It was comfortable and suited our family. Even empty, the walls seemed to echo the voices and laughter that provided the soundtrack to our lives for almost 11 years. The rooms fairly buzzed with memories of all the happy times we shared there.

But the commute to work grew more dismal by the day. Too many cars and trucks on too few roads means too long driving to and from work. I began to fantasize about living in a village with only one flashing light.

EDITORIAL: Texas Baptists learn to live at peace

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EDITORIAL:

Texas Baptists learn to live at peace

Democracy sure is messy. Especially in times of peace.

For years, the Baptist General Convention of Texas faced an ominous threat: Fundamentalists with a theological/political agenda for absolute domination set out to take control of the Southern Baptist world. They succeeded nationally in 1990, and then they set their sights on state conventions. One fundamentalist leader notoriously said their ultimate prizes were the BGCT, Baylor University and the Baptist Standard.

For traditional Texas Baptists living “abroad”—beyond our borders—those years afforded numerous opportunities for embarrassment. The most visible leaders of the fundamentalist movement hailed from Texas, so outsiders associated Texas Baptists with their theo-political excesses. Non-Texans seemed to think the BGCT would fall and become the bastion of Baptist fundamentalism.



This left traditional Texas Baptists saying something like this: “The BGCT is not like that. Traditional Texas Baptists are biblical conservatives, but we’re certainly not fundamentalists. We believe in the priesthood of all believers and religious liberty. We champion local-church autonomy. Texas Baptists will resist fundamentalism like nobody else. Our convention will

stay strong. When others fall, the BGCT will remain a beacon for liberty and freedom.”

WMU FamilyFEST joins Buckner, BGCT to minister on the border

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Pablo
González,
pastor of
Iglesia
Bautista
Antioquia in
Juarez,
consults
with one of
the
residents in
his church's
transitional
living home.
The mother
of three
cares for
her children
during the
day while
her husband
drives
workers to
and from
the
maquiladora
factories.

WMU FamilyFEST joins Buckner,

BGCT to minister on the border

By Jenny Pope

Buckner International

JUAREZ, Mexico—Jan Burton sat with Pastor Pascual Juarez from Iglesia Bautista Genesis as he told her, through a translator, about the hardships of serving God in a border town. Weeks earlier, thugs burned his trailer to the ground, held him at gunpoint and threatened to kill him and his family.

“He told us that he was not going to leave Juarez until God sent him away,” Burton said.

Faith Digest

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Faith Digest

Study links religious liberty with prosperity. Religious freedom goes hand-in-hand with economic well-being and freedom of the press—but not necessarily with a secular or religiously oriented government. Those are the some findings of a global survey conducted by the [Center for Religious Freedom at the Hudson Institute](#), a conservative-leaning think tank in Washington, D.C. Researchers named radical Islam the biggest threat to religious freedom. Most of the nations listed as “least religiously free” were

states with Muslim extremism, while those with the most religious freedom had Christian roots, according to the report. The countries that scored one on the seven-tier Religious Freedom Index, indicating the greatest religious liberty, were the United States, Ireland, Estonia and Hungary. Countries rated seven, indicating the most religious restriction, were Iran, North Korea, Saudi Arabia and Sudan. As a result of events over the past year, Iraq also sunk to the lowest rank of religious freedom.

Welsh church: 'Power to the people.' An aging Anglican church in Wales has come up with a modern way to give—or at least sell—power to the people by marketing its spare electricity to Britain's National Grid. The power comes from 30 solar panels installed as part of a \$1.5 million restoration at the crumbling, Victorian-era St. Joseph's Church in Cwmaman, in the Cynon Valley. Pastor David Way initially had his doubts, but the church now has discovered that the \$66,000 array of panels are producing far more electricity than had been expected or needed. The church now will sell off the surplus.

Baptist volunteers rebuilding lives one house at a time

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Baptist volunteers rebuilding lives one house at a time

By **Jessica Dooley**

Communications Intern

'HANIS—When Mario Reyes woke up on July 20, he expected it to be a Saturday like any other. But when he looked out his window and saw water rushing through a nearby pasture, he knew he had to get out of his house.

Most residents received little or no warning about the overflowing Seco River, so Reyes took it upon himself to inform his neighbors before heading for higher ground.

Texas
Baptist
Men
volunteers
serve in
D'Hanis,
helping
the
community
near
Hondo
recover
from a
flood.