

# **Interracial New Baptist Covenant program focuses on unity in Christ**

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## **Interracial New Baptist Covenant program focuses on unity in Christ**

**By Hannah Elliott**

*Associated Baptist Press*

ATLANTA (ABP)—Even though they are known for their history of independence, Baptists from more than 40 American and Canadian groups will converge under a banner of unity next month in Atlanta.

Organizers of the Celebration of a New Baptist Covenant recently announced the event's theme, "Unity in Christ," and details of special breakout sessions. The historic convergence—20,000 Baptists expected from a wide variety of geographical, racial, denominational and ideological backgrounds—is scheduled Jan. 30-Feb. 1 at the Georgia World Congress Center.

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# **New Jersey church makes good on \$1 million pledge to Gulf Coast**

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## **New Jersey church makes good on \$1 million pledge to Gulf Coast**

**By Jeff Diamant**

*Religion News Service*

SUMMIT, N.J. (RNS)—Fountain Baptist Church, an African-American congregation formed 110 years ago in Summit, N.J., mostly by gardeners and domestic workers, recently gained the distinction of being one of the few churches nationwide ever to raise \$1 million for a specific charitable cause.

Members of the congregation have been donating money for the Hurricane Katrina recovery effort since May 2006, when Fountain Baptist announced its \$1 million pledge. The members met the pledge in November and celebrated the achievement at the church's annual Thanksgiving services.

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# On the Move

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## On the Move

- **Roddy Arnold** to First Church in Pottsville as pastor.
- **Brian Brewer** to First Church in Sulphur Springs as high school minister.
- **Jonathan Brown** to First Church in Temple as minister of children from First Church in Kingwood.
- **John Cox** has resigned as pastor of McMahan Church in Dale.

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## Romney garners praise, criticism for church-state views in speech

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Republican  
presidential  
candidate  
Mitt  
Romney  
delivers an  
address  
titled  
“Faith in  
America” at  
the George  
H.W. Bush  
Presidential  
Library in  
College  
Station.  
(REUTERS  
/Jessica  
Rinaldi)

## **Romney garners praise, criticism for church-state views in speech**

**By Robert Marus**

*Associated Baptist Press*

WASHINGTON (ABP)—Mitt Romney’s speech on faith and public affairs elicited both praise and criticism from a broad spectrum of observers—and it didn’t always break down along traditional right-left lines.

The highly anticipated speech by the Republican presidential contender

was designed to allay the fears of evangelical Christians, who make up a large proportion of GOP voters in Iowa. Recent polls have shown churchgoing evangelicals are more likely than any other major group to harbor doubts about electing a Mormon president.

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## **TBM sends chainsaws to Oklahoma, blankets to Iraq**

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## **TBM sends chainsaws to Oklahoma, blankets to Iraq**

**By John Hall**

*Texas Baptist Communications*

DALLAS—Texas Baptist Men disaster relief is responding to emergencies and meeting needs from central Oklahoma to northern Iraq.

Four chainsaw crews were dispatched to Oklahoma City to clear away fallen limbs caused by an ice storm that paralyzed much of the Midwest. The crews, who are being housed and fed at Northwest Baptist Church in Oklahoma City, may work up to two weeks.

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# Texas Tidbits

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## Texas Tidbits

**Group encourages women in Baptist pulpits.** Baptist Women in Ministry is encouraging Baptist churches to invite a woman from their congregation, community or a seminary to preach Feb. 3 as part of the Martha Stearns Marshall Day of Preaching. The day honors Marshall, an 18th century Baptist preacher, and is meant to further develop the skills of Baptist women who feel God's calling to preach. Last year, more than 50 congregations in the United States and one in Japan participated in the day. Baptist Women in Ministry hopes at least 100 churches will participate this year, said Julie O'Teter, a member of the group's leadership team. For more information, visit [www.bwim.info](http://www.bwim.info) or e-mail [Julie.Oteter@bgct.org](mailto:Julie.Oteter@bgct.org).

**Texans on New Baptist Covenant program.** Two Texas Baptist pastors—George Mason from Wilshire Baptist Church in Dallas and Ellis Orosco from Calvary Baptist Church in McAllen—will be part of a miniature preaching festival within next year's Celebration of a New Baptist Covenant. The homiletics mini-conference is scheduled to take place during the breakout-session times at the conference, Jan. 30-Feb. 1 in Atlanta.

**Church delays decision on gay couples.** Broadway Baptist Church in Fort Worth postponed a scheduled Dec. 2 decision on whether to include homosexuals as couples in a church pictorial directory. The church referred

the matter to its deacons, who are expected to bring a recommendation by Feb. 24. The issue surfaced when some gay church members asked to be photographed as couples and pictured as such in the church directory, scheduled for publication as part of the church's 125th anniversary celebration. Some members expressed concern that picturing gays as couples would be perceived as the church's endorsement of homosexual behavior. The Baptist General Convention of Texas—with which Broadway is affiliated—is on record affirming churches that minister to homosexuals but has characterized homosexual behavior as sinful. BGCT practice has been to reject financial contributions from a church that endorses homosexual behavior, thereby essentially cutting ties between that church and the state convention.

**Valley Baptist's cardiovascular care recognized nationally.** Valley Baptist Medical Center-Harlingen has been named one of the top 100 hospitals in the nation—and the only one south of Houston—for saving lives and reducing complications in heart patients. The results from the Thomson Top 100 Hospitals awards will be published in Modern Healthcare, and the award will be presented to Valley Baptist at the 100 Top Hospitals Summit in Colorado Springs, Co., next summer. Thomson Healthcare analyzed and scored Valley Baptist and more than 1,000 other hospitals around the country for patient survival rates, preventing infections, and other measures related to heart attack, congestive heart failure, bypass surgery, angioplasties and other coronary interventions.

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# **TOGETHER: Tune your heart to the wait**

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## **TOGETHER: Tune your heart to the wait**

Rosemary says I am a terrible “waiter.” She says everywhere I go, I have to have a handful of stuff to read or a list of calls to make or a piece of paper to write another list on. I can’t stand to be waiting with nothing to do.



Executive Director  
BGCT Executive  
Board

When we served a church composed of military families in Germany, we learned they know a lot about waiting. Husbands and fathers often were gone for weeks at a time. They accepted the waiting as a necessary part of being in the Army. Soldiers told of being gone from their families during World War II for three, four, even five years without furlough.



Can you imagine that kind of waiting?

While living two years in a German village, we were introduced to Advent, which instantly made sense to me. Here was a way that Christians through the centuries had reminded themselves in a daily way that Christmas is about Christ. Each day in the homes, an Advent calendar with Scriptures and prayers would mark the days of waiting for Christmas.

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# **Bible Studies for Life Series for December 16: Being changed by the Savior**

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**Bible Studies for Life Series for December 16**

## **Being changed by the Savior**

- Luke 1:26-56

**[By Steve Dominy](#)**

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# **BaptistWay Bible Series for December 16: Live the unbound life**

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**BaptistWay Bible Series for December 16**

## **Live the unbound life**

• Mark 2:13-17, 23—3:6

[By Andrew Daugherty](#)

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**Romney: No candidate  
should become the spokesman  
for his faith**

December 13, 2007

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# **Romney: ‘No candidate should become the spokesman for his faith’**

**By Ken Camp**

*Managing Editor*

COLLEGE STATION—People of faith who value religious liberty “have a friend and an ally in me,” but promoters of the “religion of secularism” who want to strip religion from the public square do not, former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney, a Republican presidential contender and a Mormon, told religious and social conservatives in Texas.

Romney spoke to invited guests at the George H.W. Bush Presidential Library on the Texas A&M University campus in College Station.

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## **Executive Board may vote on short-term interim executive director**

December 13, 2007

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## **Executive Board may vote on**

# short-term interim executive director

**By John Hall**

*Texas Baptist Communications*

DALLAS—The Baptist General Convention of Texas Executive Board may bring in an interim executive director—at least for a short time.

BGCT Executive Board leaders are examining options for short-term leadership of the board's staff in the likely event the next convention executive director will not be on the job before BGCT Executive Director [Charles Wade retires](#) at the end of January.

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## **Cybercolumn by John Duncan: Merry Christmas, Ross Wolfe**

December 13, 2007

Posted: 12/07/07

### **CYBER COLUMN: Merry Christmas, Ross Wolfe**

**By John Duncan**

I'm sitting here under the old oak tree, thinking about Christmas and wondering in the spirit of the season about Ross Wolfe. Where are you,

dear brother? Ross Wolfe, I wish you a Merry Christmas.

You sent me a letter, and I lost it while moving to a new town. If you had seen the 6,000 pounds of stuff, file cabinets and hundreds of books and papers stacked high that the movers moved to my new office, you would understand. I dug deep for your letter, but to no avail. In fact, you have, through the years, sent me letters.

John Duncan
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