

BGCT launches Texas Hope 2010 evangelism initiative

May 9, 2008

Posted: 5/09/08

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DALLAS—Randel Everett believes everyone needs hope: Hope they can find their next meal. Hope they can overcome the deep pain they are confronting. Hope they can fill the void that resides within them.

Christ is the only true hope that can meet those needs, he said. The sooner people have that hope, the better.

For more information,
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www.texashope2010.com/.

So, the Baptist General Convention of Texas' new executive director has launched Texas Hope 2010, an initiative designed to help Texas Baptists work together to share the gospel with every non-Christian within Texas "in their own language and their own culture" by Easter 2010.

"We want to make sure every person in Texas has an opportunity to respond to the gospel of Christ, regardless of their ethnicity, language or

socioeconomic status,” Everett said.

The campaign will focus on three areas—prayer, caring and sharing.

Prayer undergirds all evangelistic efforts, Everett said. It makes Christians more aware of opportunities to share their faith.

Caring about people through relationships and service provides opportunities for people to express what Christ has done for them, Everett said. This component of Texas Hope 2010 particularly will focus on meeting the needs of hungry people across the state.

Feeding the hungry

Texas has the second-highest rate of food insecurity in the nation. More than 3.1 million people in the state don’t know where they will get their next meal, and nearly a quarter of the state’s children live in households classified as “food insecure.”

“One in 10 people in Texas is a Texas Baptist,” Everett said. “With those kinds of resources, if one person in this state goes to bed hungry, it’s our fault.”

The sharing component will focus on an evangelistic push, including Bible distribution, Everett said, noting he hopes Texas Baptists can present the gospel in a culturally correct way to each of the roughly 11 million Texans who are unchurched.

While sharing the gospel with 11 million people may seem daunting, Everett notes BGCT-affiliated churches claim 2.3 million members. That means each Texas Baptist needs to share his or her faith with six people by April 4, 2010, which Everett believes is possible.

An assignment for everyone

Each Texas Baptist, church, association and institution will have a unique role to play in Texas Hope 2010, he added. God calls each believer and each group to a “unique kingdom assignment,” creating a special place for each in a large evangelistic push.

Texas Baptists need to begin praying about their kingdom assignment and possible ways they can be part of Texas Hope 2010, Everett urged. The BGCT will begin identifying leaders in the areas of prayer, caring and sharing so they can help flesh out a strategy to reach non-Christians in Texas.

The key to the effort will be all Texas Baptists following God’s calling upon their lives as well as cooperating with the other Texas Baptists for maximum impact, Everett said. If that happens, the state could be radically changed.

“I pray that church attendance, baptisms and giving will go up,” he said. “I hope crime will go down. I hope legislation is passed to help the children in need in our state. I hope it makes a transformational impact on the state. I think it will if we can do this.”

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