

Texas Baptist Forum

September 29, 2007

Posted: 9/29/07

Texas Baptist Forum

Faith is central

Faith is whatever you center your life around. If it's making money, then money is your faith. If you center your life on God and living his way, then God is your faith.

The first faith is idolatrous and leads to self-destruction. The second faith is true, for it is creative and builds life. Both are faith, for each is the organizing principle in someone's life.

- [Jump to online-only letters below](#)

Letters are welcomed. Send them to
marvknox@baptiststandard.com;
250 words maximum.



"It amazes me that Jesus could call a Matthew and a Simon both to be his disciples. Matthew was a tax collector, a conservative of the conservatives. Simon was a zealot, the liberal of the liberals. ... They were farther apart than Ted Kennedy and Rush Limbaugh could ever dream of being. ... What's amazing is that you don't find Jesus whispering a word about which one he thought was better. ... Jesus is the lord of a transpolitical kingdom."

Greg Boyd

Pastor of Woodland Hills Church in St. Paul, Minn., speaking at a forum on ministers and politics sponsored by Christian Ethics Today (RNS)

"In order to be an effective leader, you can't just be president of the Christians. It insults our intelligence to assume that we would let difference separate us."

T.D. Jakes

Dallas megachurch pastor, writing a letter to the editor in *Time* magazine in response to an article on Democrats and religion (RNS)

But even true faith contains doubt. Take biblical Abraham, for example. He was certain he experienced a call from God. But he struggled with doubt about whether he was getting the call of God right. Scripture says that after Abraham experienced God's call, "he went out from his homeland, Babylonia, to he knew not where."

Small church reaches nursing home residents

September 29, 2007

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Volunteers from Ephesus Baptist Church in Jewett lead a worship service for nursing home residents.
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Small church reaches nursing home residents

By George Henson

Staff Writer

EWETT—Worshippers tapped fingers and feet as they sang songs closest to their hearts—"I'll Fly Away," "I've Got a Mansion" and "I'm in the Gloryland Way." A guitar, keyboard and tambourine accompanied a five-member choir.

The worship service filled with glory—and gusto—was in a nursing home.

Students sign petition for freedom and justice

September 29, 2007

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Students sign petition for freedom and justice

More than 1,000 Texas Baptist college students signed a Baptist World Alliance petition in support of freedom and justice worldwide during the Focus conference in Arlington.

By signing the petition, the students stated their agreement with the BWA Centenary Congress goal of religious freedom and justice for all people: “We oppose all forms of slavery, racism, apartheid and ethnic cleansing and so will do all in our power to address and confront these sins.”

The students also pledged to “urge all Christians to pray, to unite and to speak out to protect the rights of every person to worship God without fear of death, torture, imprisonment or economic exclusion.”

The BWA seeks to have 10,000 signatures for the petition that ultimately will be presented to the North American Baptist Fellowship, the BWA Freedom and Justice Commission and the BWA representative to the United Nations.

Texas Tidbits

September 29, 2007

Posted: 9/29/07



Texas Tidbits

Historical Society meeting set. The Texas Baptist Historical Society will hold its fall meeting at 10:30 a.m. Oct. 29, immediately prior to the Baptist General Convention of Texas annual meeting. The society’s lunch meeting will be held in the Gilliland Education Center at the Globe-News Performing Arts Center, directly across from the Amarillo Convention Center. The agenda includes the election of officers, recognition of the

history award winners, and a presentation by Terrell Blodgett from the LBJ School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas about Pat Neff, former governor of Texas, president of Baylor University and prominent Baptist layman. Cost is \$10 per person, payable at the door. The reservation deadline is Oct. 22. To make reservations, contact the Texas Baptist Historical Society at (972) 331-2235 or Autumn.Hendon@bgct.org.

BGCT hotel block full; more housing options added. The block of 700 hotel rooms reserved by the Baptist General Convention of Texas for the BGCT annual meeting is full, but the convention has added additional housing options to the annual meeting website, www.bgct.org/annualmeeting.

TOGETHER: Board made the responsible decision

September 29, 2007

Posted: 9/29/07

TOGETHER: Board made the responsible decision

The BGCT Executive Board faced the challenge this past week of dealing with a decrease in funds available next year to support our work together.

To meet our 2008 budget, changes in benefits, spending and staff reductions must be addressed. The board did not want to approve a budget where 25 to 30 staff positions would be affected by those reductions. But after a great deal of very open discussion, they reluctantly—but responsibly—voted to recommend the budget to the annual meeting in Amarillo.



The finance subcommittee had been working with and examining options since August, and the Administration Support Committee met prior to the full board meeting. Both groups believe the way in which the budget addresses the reduction is the most appropriate option.

Some staff responsibilities will be reassigned, some tasks and roles combined and some jobs eliminated. Some employees will be eligible to retire, and some will be eligible for various benefit payouts per current policies. Everyone affected will receive a severance. As some begin searching for new opportunities, our human resources department will provide outplacement services to assist with resumes, Internet and job search access, and search strategies. The transition assistance being provided still does not make this task any easier for anyone involved, but it allows us to show how much we care and how much we appreciate their service.

We believe the end result of the changes will make us even more effective in using the missions and ministry dollars given by the churches which

support the critical work of our staff with churches and the amazing work of our ministry and educational institutions.

Venezuelan Baptists hit their stride, enter partnership with BGCT

September 29, 2007

Posted: 9/29/07



Members of
Church at
Brooks Hills
in
Birmingham,
Ala., support
the Venezuela
mobile
medical clinic
with
volunteers,
games and
food. The
clinic is one
of many
ministries
Texas
Baptists can
support in
Venezuela. It
is in need of
food medical
professionals,
medicine and
Christians to
run games
and build
relationships
with children.
(Photos by
John
Hall/BGCT)

Venezuelan Baptists hit their stride, enter partnership with BGCT

By John Hall

Texas Baptist Communications

CARACAS, Venezuela—By age 50 or so, some people have become mired in mid-life crisis or start downshifting into pre-retirement gear. But Venezuelan Baptists are just hitting their stride.

The National Baptist Convention of Venezuela, which was started in 1951, is experiencing unprecedented growth. Last year, the nearly 500-church convention launched a strategic plan to double the number of churches in the convention by 2010. Venezuelan Baptists started 70 churches during the first year, and they hope to start another 70 by the end of 2007.



For more
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about
mission
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in
Venezuela,
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Partnerships
at (888)
244-9400.
[View a
slideshow
of photos
from
Venezuela.](#)

Many existing congregations either are starting or are in the midst of construction projects in an effort to keep pace with growth. Often, the increase in membership is so rapid, Sunday school classes are forced to meet in half-constructed facilities.

WorldconneX fund helps

churches send and support their missionaries

September 29, 2007

Posted: 9/29/07

WorldconneX fund helps churches send and support their missionaries

By Ken Camp

Managing Editor

[WorldconneX](#), the missions network launched by the Baptist General Convention of Texas, is establishing a fund to help churches send out their own missionaries.

The WorldconneX board of directors voted to establish a church-sending mission fund. WorldconneX will receive designated contributions from churches and individuals that it will direct according to the donors' instructions to support missions personnel deployed by missions-sending churches.

Storylist for 10/01/07 issue

September 29, 2007

Storylist for week of 10/01/07

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Previously Posted

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- [BGCT launches internal audit regarding more alleged improprieties in the Valley](#)
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Seminary

- [Enrollment, student test scores up at many Texas Baptist schools](#)
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 - [See articles from the previous 9/03/07 issue here.](#)
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BaptistWay Bible Series for October 7: It's a wonderful life

September 29, 2007

Posted: 9/27/07

BaptistWay Bible Series for October 7

It's a wonderful life

- Romans 5:1-11

[By Andrew Daugherty](#)

Bible Studies for Life Series for October 7: Quality is Job #1

September 29, 2007

Posted: 9/24/07

Bible Studies for Life for October 7

Quality is Job #1

- Matthew 5:1-12

[By Steve Dominy](#)

Explore the Bible Series for Oct. 7: Watch your words

September 29, 2007

Posted: 9/24/07

[**Explore the Bible Series for October 7**](#)

Watch your words

- Matthew 11:1-12:50

By Travis Frampton

Hardin-Simmons University, Abilene

In Deuteronomy 5:12-14, Moses commands the Israelites to: "Observe the Sabbath day by keeping it holy, as the Lord your God has commanded you. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work."

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Trustees question Roberts's leadership after VP resigns from Midwestern Seminary

September 29, 2007

Posted: 9/21/07

Trustees question Roberts' leadership after VP resigns from Midwestern Seminary

By Greg Warner

Associated Baptist Press

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (ABP)—The chief financial officer at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary resigned Sept. 20 in a dispute with President Philip Roberts over a financial analysis that raised questions about Roberts' leadership, the school's trustee chairman said.

David Hodge, vice president of business services, confirmed his resignation but declined to talk about the dispute or criticize the seminary.