

Student missionaries discover Christâ€™s presence while cleaning toilets

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Whitney Travis, a senior at Texas A&M University, spent nine weeks in Huntsville as a Go Now summer missionary with the Baptist General Convention of Texas. (Watch the [slideshow of missions photos here](#))

Student missionaries discover Christ's presence while cleaning toilets

By **Jessica Dooley**

Communications Intern

The ideal summer vacation usually doesn't involve cleaning restrooms or talking to families of prisoners every day. But for more than 160 college students, this is exactly what they believe God wanted them to do.

Through the Baptist General Convention of Texas' [Go Now Missions](#) program, 167 college students devoted their summer to spreading the gospel. Some had the opportunity to minister overseas or around the nation; others served in Texas.

Flip flops. Bibles. Teenagers: YEC cultivates relationships with God

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FLIP FLOPS. BIBLES. TEENAGERS: YEC cultivates relationships with God

By Barbara Bedrick

Texas Baptist Communications

DALLAS- Struggling through the teenage years can be difficult under

ordinary circumstances, but for 13-year-old Raymond Lopez the road has been particularly painful — until now.

RIGHT or WRONG? Welcoming the disabled

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RIGHT or WRONG? Welcoming the disabled

A disabled friend told me: "Your church is not friendly to people with disabilities. If the Americans with Disabilities Act could be applied, your congregation would be closed down." If she's right, what have I missed theologically and ethically about our church?

Around the State

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Around the State

- **The Texas Baptist Missions Foundation** is hosting a Sept. 17 event to help North Texas churches and individuals connect with mission opportunities through Baptist General Convention of Texas avenues. “Celebrate Texas Missions” will be held at Park Cities Church in Dallas and begin at 10 a.m. and continue until 1:30 p.m. Among the groups represented will be Texas Baptist Men, Buckner International, Woman’s Missionary Union of Texas, WorldconneX, and the BGCT’s collegiate ministry, community missions, border/Mexico, world hunger and worldwide partnership arms. Paul Powell will be the keynote speaker for the free gathering, which includes lunch provided by Texas Baptist Men.

Kallie Mathews and Kathryn Barnes paused to pray in front of the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah Witnesses in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Spain, during a mission trip by a group from Casa View Church in Dallas. The mission team to the Canary Islands split into two groups. One team taught English as a second language, and the other team focused on prayer, door-to-door evangelism and other tasks with Las Palmas Baptist Church in Gran Canaria.

Casa View Minister of Music Gordon Moore, who led the group, and his wife, Amy, are former missionaries to the Canary Islands.

- **Debbie Rippstein** has been named executive director of Gracewood, the Children at Heart Ministries residential program for single mothers and their children in Houston. Children at Heart is an agency of the Baptist

General Convention of Texas.

- **Gabriel Cortés** has been named special assistant to the president at Baptist University of the Americas after joining the university in 2004 as executive assistant to then-President Albert Reyes. He now will have additional responsibilities for directing a church relations program and promoting the Center for Culture and Language Studies program.
- **Ninety-nine University of Mary Hardin-Baylor students** were awarded degrees during summer commencement ceremonies. Seventy-nine earned bachelor's degrees, and 20 were awarded master's degrees. Keith Bruce, director of institutional ministries for the Baptist General Convention of Texas, was awarded an honorary doctor of humanities degree.

Open plains, open hearts welcome Austrian Baptists to Texas

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Austrian
Baptist
students found
encouragement
and mission
opportunities
during their
trip to Texas.
(Photo/Dietrich
Fischer-Dorl)

Open plains, open hearts welcome Austrian Baptists to Texas

By John Hall

Texas Baptist Communications

DALLAS—Open plains and open hearts helped show Austrian Baptists how big the Baptist family is.

A group of Austrian Baptist youth recently finished a several-week-long trip through Texas, during which they served at Mission Arlington, ministered through Woodlawn Baptist Church in Austin and participated in [Super Summer](#) at [Hardin-Simmons University](#).

Baptist Briefs

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Baptist Briefs

Some SBC leaders endorse blog. Several prominent Baptist leaders have publicly endorsed a groundbreaking blog operated by reform-minded pastors within the Southern Baptist Convention. The endorsers include the presidents of three SBC entities and a college president—Morris Chapman, president of the SBC’s Executive Committee; Thom Rainer, president of LifeWay Christian Resources; Jerry Rankin, president of the SBC’s International Mission Board; and David Dockery, president of Union University. All have posted messages of support for SBCOutpost.com. The weblog, previously run by Georgia pastor Marty Duren, relaunched in June as a collaborative site with the goal of becoming the “premier site for Southern Baptist news and commentary.” All of the bloggers are conservatives and have been involved in efforts to reform the Southern Baptist Convention, which most say has become too narrow and moribund under the leadership of an older generation of biblical inerrantists.

NAMB plans to sell FamilyNet. Southern Baptists’ [North American Mission Board](#) plans to sell its FamilyNet to Atlanta pastor Charles Stanley’s [In Touch Ministries](#). NAMB trustees reportedly voted unanimously Aug. 8 to accept a letter of intent from In Touch outlining the ministry’s intent to buy the television network. Under terms of the letter, NAMB and In Touch Ministries will work together to evaluate and negotiate the planned sale and purchase of FamilyNet, and finalize details for the

sale on or before Oct. 31.

Black churches face challenges in maintaining musical tradition

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The choir rehearses at Mississippi Boulevard Christian Church in Memphis, Tenn.

Black churches face challenges in maintaining musical tradition

By Bob Faw

Religion & Ethics NewsWeekly

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (RNS)—Music, for many, is at the heart of the black worship experience.

“Music comes as a softener of people,” said Frank Thomas, pastor of Mississippi Boulevard Christian Church in Memphis, Tenn. “It allows me to gradually open myself to receive the word. That’s why you have so much music in church, because people can’t just receive ... the raw word.”



Glen McMillan leads the choir at Concord Baptist Church of Christ in Brooklyn, N.Y.

Book Reviews

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Book Reviews

[The Mr. and Mrs. Happy Handbook: Everything I Know About Love and Marriage](#) by Steve Doocy (William Morrow)



Nonfiction has come a long way from the inner lives of grasshoppers and the complexity of moon rocks.

In *The Mr. & Mrs. Happy Handbook*, a reindeer falls from the sky and dents the family car, an anaconda is under the patio, author Steve Doocy and his wife, Kathy, end up spending their honeymoon at a remote leper colony, and concerned kids are asking about the birds and the bees—and the carrot. Try explaining that one.



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

In this laugh-out-loud book about married life, Doocy, co-host of *Fox and Friends*, shares the nitty-gritty about love, married life, family and what to do when the neighbors' kid starts foaming at the mouth. Blame it on the Easter bunny.

BUA inauguration focuses on leadership development

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BUA inauguration focuses on leadership development

“Forging New Leaders for a New World” will be the theme as [Baptist University of the Americas](#) installs its seventh president, René Maciel, former assistant dean of Baylor University’s Truett Theological Seminary.

Truett Professor Hulitt Gloer will deliver the inaugural address during the public inauguration and installation ceremony, 10 a.m. Sept. 28 at Primera Iglesia Bautista Mexicana in San Antonio.

René
Maciel

“While in 2007 the university is celebrating its 60-year history of developing Hispanic church leaders for Texas, the inauguration provides a visionary vantage point to look into the future and define the kind of Christian leaders that the next generations will need,” Maciel said.

The inaugural theme was selected to emphasize the school’s commitment to leadership development for undergraduates who seek to be equipped to fulfill their Christian calling in a world marked by multiculturalism, globalism, emerging church structures and innovative mission methodologies, organizers noted.

Cartoon

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“I’m sorry,
Brother
Brown, but
your gift
assessment
came back
negative.”

Church starters learn the ropes; BGCT & CBF establish covenant

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Allan Escobar
of San
Antonio; Dick
Allison of
Hattiesburg,
Miss.; Tom
Johnson from
Valley Forge,
Penn.; and
Leo Garcia
from
Sahuarita,
Ariz., build
with Lego
blocks as a
learning
exercise at
the
Cooperative
Baptist
Fellowship
Church
Planting Boot
Camp at
Truett
Theological
Seminary.
(Photos by
Matthew
Minard/Baylor
University)

Church starters learn the ropes; BGCT & CBF establish covenant

By **Whitney Farr**

Communications Intern

WACO—While 36 future church planters learned with Legos inside Truett Seminary, two Baptist leaders sat in the courtyard discussing the power behind the recent partnership of Cooperative Baptist Fellowship and the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

“It’s not a legal contract. It’s more of a spiritual covenant partnering between BGCT and CBF in terms of starting new churches,” said Phil Hester, CBF church starts specialist. “In the covenant, we both agree to bring certain resources, and the church planter agrees to have a mutual responsibility to both organisms.”



Phil Hester (left), church starting specialist with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, and Charles Higgs (right), Baptist General Convention of Texas coordinator for western-heritage churches, visits with church planter Rocky Louthan and his wife, Amy. The cowboy church the Louthans are planting in Santa Fe, near Galveston, is the first product of a new church-starting partnership covenant between the BGCT and CBF.

2nd Opinion: Stats tell tale not good for Texas

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2nd Opinion: Stats tell tale not good for Texas

By Karen Wood

Start talking statistics, and my eyes glaze over. I'm already yawning, just

thinking about percentages and number signs.

But smack dab in the middle of some great reading recently, out popped some statistics. For once, I didn't snooze. I got scared—the kind of scared with goose bumps and shivers running up and down the spine.

Right there, plain as day: "Texas, at 23.8 percent, had a higher percentage of (health) uninsured citizens than any other state in 2006."