

# Bivocational ministers conference celebrates family, friends & Christ

July 17, 2009

BELTON—Bivocational ministers and their spouses gathered at the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor to discuss “Simple Solutions for Tough Times: Living By Faith” during the annual Bivocational Smaller Church Ministers and Spouses Statewide Conference.

In addition to times of networking and fellowship, the gathering included seminars on such topics as conflict management, the use of technology in ministry, counseling and evangelizing communities, how to juggle a career, ministry and family and how to equip church leaders to serve congregations.

“I hope families had good experiences in our workshops and learned a lot through them,” said Cecil Deadman, Baptist General Convention of Texas small church/bivocational consultant. “I also hope that (participants) were able to spend time together and enjoy some relaxation.”

New officers of the Texas Baptist Bivocational Ministers and Spouses Association are (left to right) Treasurer Danny Rogers of Living Proof Baptist Church in Cleburne, President Tony Tawater of Lone Willow Baptist Church in Cleburne, Secretary Ellen Goodson of Highland Baptist Church in Denton, First Vice President Rosalind Ray of Fairy Baptist Church in Fairy and Second Vice President Richard Ray of First Baptist Church in Wink. (PHOTO/Courtesy of Texas Baptist Bivocational Ministers and Spouses Association)

A teen conference also was held for children of pastors, deacons, music leaders and administrators. The Nick Gainey Band led worship, and Emily Prevost , associate director of the BGCT Congregational Leadership Team and young leaders consultant, was the keynote speaker. Prevost's message challenged students to train themselves spiritually by praying and dwelling on Scripture by reading it habitually and focusing on key words.

"The talks were really good," said Laurel Luedecke, a Bell Baptist Association summer missionary who helped lead the youth portion of the conference. "I hope it enriched their worship experience, and that they realized worship goes outside the normal church service."

She believes it is beneficial for youth to network with other students with common backgrounds.

"It is important youth have this opportunity to mingle with kids that are in their same situation," Luedecke said. "They've made good friendships, and hopefully realized they're not the only ones going through their particular situation."

Scholarship were presented to Joao Chaves of Grace Point Church in San Antonio, a Baptist University of the Americas student, and James Han of New Song Church in Carrollton, a Baylor University student, from the Claude and Ilene Slate Memorial Scholarship Fund. The scholarship fund is made possible through individual contributions and a pre-conference golf tournament each year.

"I think God worked through people like you," Chaves said in receiving the scholarship. "It's amazing how God has been faithful to me and my family."

Both scholarship recipients are going into bivocational ministry, and the money will be used for their education.

"God is a great provider," Han said. "Because of you, the Lord has pulled

through in my life again.”

Leonardo Diaz of Primera Iglesia Bautista in Hitchcock was named Exemplary Bivocational Pastor of the Year because of his committed leadership to both the church and his community. He was recognized for his service during the Hurricane Ike recovery period as he encouraged the community through work projects, block parties and worship services.

Others honored included Jimmy Young of Streetman Baptist Church as the Exemplary Bivocational Music Minister of the Year and Derrell Monday of the Bi-Fork Baptist Area as the Exemplary Director of Missions. The association also provided a plaque expressing appreciation for Randy Rather as president of the Texas Baptist Bivocational Ministers and Spouses Association since 2007.

The group elected a new slate of officers: President Tony Tawater, pastor of Lone Willow Baptist Church in Cleburne; First Vice President Rosalind Ray of Fairy Baptist Church in Fairy; Second Vice President Richard Ray, pastor of First Baptist Church in Wink; Treasurer Danny Rogers of Living Proof Baptist Church in Cleburne; and Secretary Ellen Goodson of Highland Baptist Church in Denton.