

Center for Church Health partners with Church Answers

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Texas Baptists' Center for Church Health has entered into a partnership with Church Answers.

The partnership grows out of a shared passion to promote healthy churches and equip them to share the gospel, leaders of the two groups said. It will provide resources to Texas Baptists churches seeking to grow in all aspects of ministry, they added.

"We're hoping that the outcome of this partnership is Texas Baptist churches that are healthier, vibrant and growing, because they know their communities, they know their own churches, and the leaders know themselves well," said Sam Rainer, president of Church Answers.

Led by CEO and founder Thom Rainer, Church Answers provides resources, experts and community to guide church leaders through the ups and downs of ministry and church health. Thom Rainer is the former president and CEO of Lifeway Christian Resources and has written 36 books dedicated to church health and ministry.

Texas Baptists leaders reached out to the Rainers to inquire about a possible collaboration. The conversation grew, and Jonathan Smith, director of church health strategy at the center, took on the role of establishing a formal partnership.

"The partnership began when the leadership of Texas Baptists and our leadership started talking about our similar values and desires to see the Great Commission and the Great Commandment go further. We thought that we could align our resources and our teams well," Thom Rainer

explained.

Churches can reach out to Smith with their needs, and he will connect them with the Church Answers resources that best fit their criteria. Resources available include tools for all aspects of ministry, such as how to assess a church, demographic and psychographic reports, leadership development, models for reaching local communities and guides for utilizing prayer as an evangelism tool. The partnership also includes a consultant training program to raise up more people to advise churches across the state.

Thom Rainer will speak at the 2021 Baptist General Convention of Texas [annual meeting](#) Nov. 14-16 in Galveston.

Smith expressed excitement for the partnership and what it will mean for Texas Baptist churches.

“The heart of everything I’ve read and seen from the Rainers is wanting to see people know Christ and the local church excel for the kingdom of God,” Smith explained. “I’m excited for the heart and the expertise they have, and I’m excited for them to help us take that expertise to Texas Baptists.”

Smith started with Texas Baptists in 2021 as part of the new Center for Church Health. His role is part of an emphasis by Texas Baptists to assess the needs of churches and connect them with the tools they need to remain healthy and succeed in the mission of sharing Christ and showing love. Smith’s role and the Church Answers partnership are part of Texas Baptists’ commitment to the GC2—Great Commission, Great Commandment—movement.

Churches can access the tools and resources made available through the partnership by contacting Smith at jonathan.smith@txb.org or (214) 828-5315.