

Churches commit to fulfill goal of Texas Hope 2010

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GARLAND—Wrapped in coats and scarves, members of First Baptist Church in Garland set out to meet their neighbors Jan. 11.

Armed with smiles and New Testaments, teams of volunteers walked the streets around the church offering a word of hope. Their objective, dubbed Project Jerusalem, was to place Scripture in more than 400 homes near the church.

“We just want to let people know we’re here as a church, we want to help minister to them,” said Doug Powell, the church’s associate pastor and minister of education. “We want to be a good neighbor to them, and part of that is getting to know them.”

Members of First Baptist Church in Garland deliver a packet of information about their church and a New Testament to each home in the neighborhoods surrounding the downtown church facility.

(PHOTO/BGCT)

The effort marked the launch of the congregation’s commitment to Texas Hope 2010, a Baptist General Convention of Texas initiative to share the hope of Christ with every Texan by Easter 2010 and meet human needs. Part of that work includes putting Scripture in every home in the state.

First Baptist Church of Garland joined churches around the state that participated in the commitment day. At First Baptist Church in Lockhart,

about 100 people signed up to pray each day at noon for the lost and the hungry. Sixty people, including three families who were visiting the church, volunteered to be part of groups that will lead the congregation in praying, caring and sharing the gospel with its community through Texas Hope 2010.

Pastor Gary Rodgers said his congregation is excited to recommit to the basic actions of their faith—praying for others, caring for them and sharing the gospel. The church has created three groups to evaluate how the congregation can accomplish those three actions more effectively.

During their commitment day service, members of Acton Baptist Church near Granbury signed Texas Hope 2010 posters, pledging to pray for their community and reach into it with the gospel. Members picked up 30-day prayer guides, and Pastor Glen Ward looks forward to working with other area churches to help distribute Scripture in the region.

“It was wonderful,” Ward said. “It was a great day.”

At Faith Baptist Church in Wichita Falls, more than 400 people pledged to pray and care for the area within a one-mile radius of the church as well as share the gospel with all the people in that area. About 7,200 people live within a mile of the church.

Southwest Cowboy Church in Clint held its first public service Jan. 11 as part of Texas Hope 2010 commitment day. Roughly 100 people attended the service, including leaders from other churches who pledged to pray for the congregation.

“We want out to reach to the western-culture community ... anybody who wants to feel comfortable coming as they are,” Pastor Martin Wilson said.

Wayne Shuffield, director of the BGCT Missions, Evangelism and Ministry Team, praised Texas Baptists for committing to share the gospel with their

communities and encouraged others to join them in an effort to expand God's kingdom.

"God is glorified as Texas Baptists stand up and step forward in commitment services for Texas Hope 2010," Shuffield said. "I pray every Texas Baptist will join the march of Christ's followers for revival and awakening in our state as together we pray, care and share Christ's hope with every person in Texas."

For more information about how to get involved in Texas Hope 2010, call (888) 244-9400 or visit www.texashope2010.com .