

# Former Buckner border ministry director joins CBF Texas missions staff

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SAN ANTONIO—The [Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Texas](#) governing board named Jorge Zapata, a South Texas pastor and former director of Texas/Mexico border ministries for [Buckner International](#), associate coordinator for missions.



Jorge and Rosa Zapata, who assumes his new role Sept. 1, will work out of the CBF Texas office in San Antonio. He will promote missions involvement and Hispanic ministries, particularly the [Together for Hope](#) rural poverty initiative along the Rio Grande, as well as other CBF global missions projects in Texas, said Rick McClatchy, CBF Texas field coordinator.

Zapata worked from 2002 to 2013 with Buckner International, coordinating mission teams along the border and the Mexican interior. He played a key role in the Buckner/CBF KidsHeart partnership, involving volunteers in service to families and children in the Rio Grande Valley.

His experience with missions teams along the border and his network of contacts there—along with his expertise in working with Hispanics, from first-generation Spanish-speakers to third-generation English-speakers—impressed the search committee, McClatchy noted.

The committee—chaired by Les Hollon, pastor at Trinity Baptist Church in San Antonio—also noted Zapata’s philosophy of missions aligns with CBF’s, and he already has been involved with the fellowship. While he worked for Buckner, he served three years as moderator of CBF’s Together for Hope network.

“He believes that doing social ministry opens the door for sharing the gospel,” McClatchy said. “He wants the church to be at the center of ministry out in the community.”

Zapata has been pastor of Texas Baptist churches in Athens, Mercedes, Harlingen and, most recently, New Wine Church in La Feria. Under Zapata’s leadership, New Wine Church has planted several congregations in *colonias*—unincorporated communities—along the border and formed a nonprofit organization to help meet needs of people in those often-underserved areas.

Zapata and his wife, Rosa, have four adult children—George, Kristy, Mindy and Joshua.