

Nearly 1,400 decisions made for Christ during City Reach

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KINGSVILLE—In the corner of a field filled with jubilant children and loudly colored inflatable bounce houses, Noe Trevino took a knee next to a trailer and talked to a young boy. As a result of the conversation, the child professed faith in Christ.

Noe Trevino, pastor of Coastal Bend Fellowship in Kingsville, knelt in prayer with a boy who asked Jesus into his life during a City Reach evangelistic emphasis. (PHOTO/John Hall/BGCT)

That moment summed up the reason for City Reach, an evangelistic emphasis sponsored and encouraged by Texas Baptists leading up to the [Baptist General Convention of Texas](#) annual meeting.

"We do this to be the presence of Christ, to show them Christ's love, to show them the living hope that we have in Christ Jesus," said Trevino, a Texas Baptist church starter and pastor of Coastal Bend Fellowship in Kingsville.

In recent weeks, churches across the region gave away backpacks full of school supplies, hosted a back-to-school bash, spent time in prisons, held revivals and welcomed the community for a block party. The events brought neighbors together, comforted offenders and provided practical help for people who needed it.

Volunteers shared the gospel at each event. Sixteen people made decisions for Christ at Coastal Bend Fellowship's school supply distribution, 29

people professed faith in Christ through the revival, and seven made faith commitments at a block party.

A prison ministry weekend, conducted in partnership with [Bill Glass Champions for Life](#), yielded 700 professions for faith and more than 500 rededications.

Through all the events, nearly 1,400 people committed to follow Christ or rededicated their lives to him.

To accomplish such varied and widespread evangelism efforts, Texas Baptists partnered with the three Hispanic fellowships in the region, [Coastal Bend Baptist Association](#), [Corpus Christi Baptist Association](#) and local churches.



A volunteer paints the faces of children at a block party held as part of City Reach.

(PHOTO/John Hall/BGCT)

"It's our responsibility and our privilege to share Christ," said Frank Palos, BGCT director of Hispanic evangelism who partnered with and encouraged Hispanic congregations involved in City Reach. "It's still our assignment to go to them rather than them come to us."

Such an emphasis on evangelism brings joy to God's heart, Trevino said.

"People are hungry," he said. "They are hungry for more than what they have in their lives. They're hungry for hope. They're hungry for truth."

Anson Nash, executive director of the Corpus Christi Baptist Association, saw that spiritual hunger firsthand as he ministered in prison for the first time. He met men serving long sentences who were spreading the gospel throughout the unit.

"I personally was able to pray the sinner's prayer with six inmates," he said. "The thing that surprised me more than anything was God is already opening doors in the prisons."

Scott Willingham, director of Texas Baptists' Evangelism Team, said City Reach empowered area Baptists to practice the principles they learned earlier this year in a Corpus Christi Engage evangelism conference sponsored by the convention.

Willingham praised the region's Baptists for their commitment to sharing Christ. He prays the evangelism training that has taken place and the block party trailer the convention has donated to the Corpus Christi Baptist Association help believers carry the gospel throughout their communities for years to come. Past City Reach efforts have had similar impact.

"The groundwork we did two years ago in Valley Reach, still carries on," Willingham said. "This year, we're taking missions in this area, evangelism in this area, and we're helping them take it to the next level."