

New network wants to provide 'missions home' for churches

October 6, 2011

ARLINGTON—Missions networks representing about 90 Texas Baptist churches have joined together to form Kinexxus—a collaborative effort designed to help churches connect with each other to share resources and missions expertise.

"For Texas Baptist churches that have been looking for a missions home, we believe they may find it here," said Kinexxus Executive Director Cindy Wiles of Arlington, who leads the Arlington-based [Global Connection Partnership Network](#).



Elijah Brown, assistant professor of missions at East Texas Baptist University, reads from the Bible at in a home in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Brown participated in a mission trip with East Texas Ethiopia Aid Mission, one of the founding affinity networks in Kinexxus.

The founding board of directors includes the pastors of First Baptist churches in Arlington, Athens and Kilgore and Cottonwood Baptist Church in Dublin, as well as a Baptist General Convention of Texas Executive Board staff representative and other missions leaders.

Leaders of Global Connection Partnership Network, [East Texas Ethiopian Aid Mission](#) and other affinity networks recognized the need for greater communication and cooperation, Wiles noted.

"It's a matter of stewardship, a matter of community and a matter of collaboration," she said. "As we looked at what we each have been doing, we saw a lot of duplication."

A meeting at Baylor University's [Truett Theological Seminary](#) drew missions leaders from churches in Athens, Arlington, Boerne, Gatesville, Dublin, Midlothian, Dallas and The Woodlands.

Representatives from the missions networks and individuals churches discussed ways they could work together to provide some overarching services that would relieve the burdens some felt in terms of finances, personnel and time.

Kinnexus grew out of those discussions and a shared desire to keep existing affinity groups intact and protect the autonomy of churches, while at the same time offer a structure where Texas Baptists—and others—could encourage, empower, energize and equip Christians for missions, she explained.

Leaders recognize in many ways those goals sound similar to those of WorldconneX, the missions network the BGCT attempted to launch several years ago.



Muslim prayers mark the end of Ramadan in the West African community where Harmony Hill Baptist Church in Lufkin and First Baptist Church in Arlington support cross-cultural evangelists and church planters.

"I think WorldconneX may have been birthed before its time," Wiles said. "Those involved in it were speaking a language nobody yet understood."

Because Kinexxus exists outside the BGCT structure, it possesses flexibility and freedom to respond quickly that could prove advantageous, Wiles added. "We intend to remain as lean as possible," she said.

Organizers see four main roles for Kinexxus:

- *Information gateway.* "Information is empowerment," Wiles said. Mike Stroope, professor of missions at Truett Theological Seminary, is serving as editor of an Internet-based training curriculum for cross-cultural missions workers.
- *Strategic networking.* Kinexxus will provide a place for idea-sharing and mentoring. Churches that feel called to a particular area or people group can make contact through Kinexxus with other churches that have a shared passion, Wiles explained.
- *Catalytic services.* One of the first services Kinexxus offers churches is access to a business office where credit card payments, donations and field support can be channeled to mission workers globally. Kinexxus also provides the framework for churches to cooperate with world partners and nongovernmental organizations.
- *Kingdom community.* "We all want a missions home," Wiles said. "We're here to serve anybody who wants to do missions in a healthy way. We're really about three things—winning people to Christ, raising up disciples and starting reproducing indigenous churches.

"We want to provide the arena—the forum—where people who are living it and doing it can learn from one another. It's really not that complicated."

An informational meeting about Kinexxus is scheduled prior to the BGCT annual meeting in Amarillo. The Kinexxus meeting will be held at 7 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 23, in the media room of the family life center at First Baptist

Church in Amarillo.