

New prayer guide highlights intercultural groups in Texas

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DALLAS—The face of Texas is changing. As the nations have come to the Lone Star State, Texas Baptists' intercultural ministries and the [Woman's Missionary Union of Texas](#) are encouraging believers to pray for, care for and share the gospel with these people.

To help Texas Baptists minister to all cultures within the state borders, the two entities have created "Praying God's Heart—Seeing With New Eyes," a 30-day prayer guide that includes Scripture showing God's heart for the nations, as well as a look at international groups, world religions and cultural worldviews that exist in Texas.

"My hope is that this will help Texas Baptists see who the lost of our state really are and what a rich tapestry of people live here that represent so many cultures," said Patty Lane, director of intercultural ministries with the Baptist General Convention of Texas. "This will give people a way to be involved with these people and pray for them."

The 36-page booklet is intended to help Christians learn about some of the more than 200 language groups who live in Texas, equipping them with the knowledge and tools needed to begin ministering to the different cultural groups in their communities.

"We hope that this will be a piece that our churches will use in praying for the nations who live in our state," said Caroline Porterfield, multicultural consultant for Texas WMU and writer of the prayer guide. WMU "knows how to pray for the nations because we have been doing it since 1888. But I cannot recall in my time in WMU that we have been given this much

specific information about the people in the state.”

The guide identifies key cultural factors for various people groups and describes barriers each has to receiving the gospel. Readers will be led in specific prayers for the groups presented in the book.

“We know in Texas the Hispanic population is growing, but sometimes we miss the other groups that are here and growing,” Porterfield said. “They are the people who cook our food in restaurants. Some of them are our doctors. Others build our houses. And many of these people do not know the Lord.”

As Texas Baptists begin to pray daily through the guide, their eyes will be opened and hearts softened to the cultural diversity around them, Porterfield said. And she hopes they will be inspired to act.

“When you see the world through God’s eyes you act different and see different,” Porterfield said. “As people pray for the peoples of the earth that live in our state, their eyes will be opened and they will be moved to minister to these people and share the hope of Christ with them.”

The guide is part of [Texas Hope 2010](#), the emphasis by Texas Baptists to pray for the lost, care for the hurting and hungry and share the gospel in ways that all Texans can respond in their own ways and languages by Easter 2010.

Lane hopes the prayer guide will move Texas Baptists currently not involved with intercultural ministry to begin making a difference through prayer.

“This will give people a way to be involved with these people by praying for them,” Lane said.

The guide will also help Texas Baptists learn about ways intercultural

believers are making a difference in the state, Porterfield said.

“We will not only learn about the people here in Texas, but the contribution they bring to Texas Baptist life,” Porterfield said.

As Texas Baptists complete the guide, Porterfield encourages each to move to action by simply offering hospitality to people of different cultures, realizing that their kindness may be the only view of Christ multicultural people groups in Texas receive.

“The first gift we can give is acceptance, welcome and respect,” Porterfield said. “We may be the only believers they know. So, what do they think of our God from the way we treat our neighbors?”

To order the pray guide, call Texas Baptists information services at (888) 244-9400. To defray costs, the suggested donation is \$1 per booklet, plus shipping costs.