

Pastor prophetically ministers to community, congregation

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SAN ANTONIO—In more than three and a half decades at Macedonia Baptist Church, Pastor Jerry Dailey has aimed to “minister to the hopes and hurts of the community and the congregation.”

By all accounts, his aim is true, and he has hit the target—whether that takes the form of providing groceries to families in need or speaking uncomfortable truth to power.

Once a month, Macedonia Baptist Church’s Good Samaritan Ministry offers groceries provided by the San Antonio Food Bank to about 150 families in the neighborhood during a drive-through food distribution.

“And it’s always tinged with the message, ‘God loves you,’” Dailey said.

Last month, the Community of Churches for Social Action recognized Dailey for chairing the Black interdenominational group and providing a prophetic voice in tough times.



Jerry Dailey chaired the Community of Churches for Social Action in San Antonio. (Photo / Ken Camp)

After the death of George Floyd at the hands of Minneapolis police officers, the organization called for police reforms including the banning of chokeholds and no-knock warrants, as well as urging local officials to affirm that “Black lives matter.”

Dailey acknowledged that public stand was not universally well-received. Some viewed it as anti-police. Others saw it as a blanket endorsement of the Black Live Matter organization, rather than as a statement of principle.

“It’s not anti-police. It’s for the police but against bad policing,” said Dailey, who was appointed by the San Antonio City Council to serve on the city’s first Police Civilian Advisory Board.

“It’s not about an organization. It’s about saying Black lives matter. Of course, all lives matter, but all lives are not living with being shot down.”

Intentionally chose not to relocate

Dailey sees speaking for justice and calling for improvements in a city he loves as part of ministering to his community.

“Where we are is where we serve,” he said.

For Macedonia Baptist Church, that has meant remaining in a changing area and seeking to serve all its residents. Years ago, the Black congregation made the decision to remain in its largely Hispanic, predominantly Catholic neighborhood in southwest San Antonio.

“After carefully considering it, we intentionally made the decision not to relocate,” Dailey said. “We have stayed in the community all these years. ...

Our ministries have always revolved around the community.”

In April, Macedonia Baptist Church will become one of 10 host sites for literacy enhancement and tutoring, made possible by a major grant. The program will focus on helping students in grade 9 to grade 12 reverse learning loss due to COVID-related disruptions.

Health care professionals at Macedonia Baptist Church lead regular educational events for the community, along with offering routine screening for diabetes and high blood pressure.

Caring for the congregation



A banner displays the congregation’s mission statement at Macedonia Baptist Church in San Antonio. (Photo / Ken Camp)

The church also cares for its own. After every Sunday worship service, the church provides free COVID testing. Members who line up in the fellowship

hall for the tests on Sunday receive the results by email no later than Tuesday.

Macedonia Baptist Church also ensures the “hopes and hurts” of every member receive due attention by assigning them to one of 12 “tribes.” Each tribe corresponds to a different month, based either on an individual’s birth month or the birth month of the head of their household.

New members also automatically are enlisted in a “Fulfillment Hour” class—a Sunday Bible study small group.

“You can choose to sing in the choir. You can choose to serve as an usher. But every member is a member of a tribe and enrolled in a Fulfillment Hour class,” Dailey said.

He sees it as one way Macedonia Baptist fulfills its vision of being “a church with an exciting ministry where love is intentional and discipleship is our goal.”



Across the decades, Pastor Jerry Dailey has received numerous honors and been recognized for his service to his community. (Photo /

Ken Camp)

Dailey has served 37 years as pastor of Macedonia Baptist Church—almost half of the church’s history. In August, he will mark 50 years in the gospel ministry and 46 years in the pastorate.

“I am a third-generation pastor. That’s the kind of legacy that has been passed down to me,” he said. “Not that I always planned to be a pastor. I wanted to be a basketball coach. But the Lord had other plans.”

Dailey was the first Black moderator of San Antonio Baptist Association. He is a former president of the African American Baptist Fellowship of Texas. He served on the Baptist General Convention of Texas Executive Board and on numerous committees for Texas Baptists, as well as in leadership roles in the National Baptist Convention of America.

While Dailey acknowledges he is “rounding third base,” he doesn’t believe his ministry is complete yet. He still sees disciples that need to be made and needs that must be met.

“I believe our church has been a blessing to the city,” he said. “If we weren’t around, we definitely would be missed. We’re always out in the community, establishing relationships. The people here know, ‘We’re here for you.’”