

Editorial: Together: Texas Baptists at their best

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Texas Baptists can be a lot of fun when they come together as they did this week at the Family Gathering in Arlington. As friends reunited, one might have heard Louis Armstrong's "[What a Wonderful World](#):" "I see friends shaking hands, saying, 'How do you do?' They're really saying, 'I love you.'"

Not all of our friends were with us this year. That is true. We were not able to say, "I love you," to everyone we love.

At the same time, we made new friends, or at least we started new relationships with the potential of becoming friendships. This ability to come together and to start new relationships is one of the great blessings of Baptist life in Texas, where there is a wide diversity of what it means to be Baptist.

"The colors of the rainbow so pretty in the sky"

Speaking of blessings: I must give a "shout out" to the African American Fellowship, who welcomed me with great hospitality during their prayer breakfast. Sharing a meal and praying with each other enriched me, and the time we spent together after breakfast was particularly empowering.

Speaking of friends reuniting: As I was introduced to the people at the breakfast table, one person stood out. She looked so familiar, but I couldn't place her. Well, she knew me, which is always more than a little embarrassing. As it turns out, my wife and I went through seminary with her. Rosalind Spencer is now the children's pastor at [Westside Baptist](#)

[Church](#) in Lewisville.

The prayer breakfast ended with a blessing of the hands. I'm a pretty buttoned-up Baptist. For instance, I'm not given to raising my hands in church. Yet even right now as I type, my eyes water with joy and wonder at having my hands anointed with oil and being blessed to serve God. May my hands do what they were blessed to do.

Kinds of being together

The annual meeting of the BGCT is one kind of "together." As we breathe in the air of that gathering, some might think, "Ah, this is Texas Baptists at their best."

The worship we shared at the African American Fellowship prayer breakfast is another kind of "together" we call church. This kind of "together" happens at least every Sunday morning, not only in Texas but all around the world. In the midst of worship, some might think, "Ah, this is Texas Baptists at their best."

No, Texas Baptists are not at their best during their annual meeting. Texas Baptists are not at their best when they gather for worship in their local churches. At those times, Texas Baptists are at their second best.

Texas Baptists are at their best when they are together with Christ and in Christ. Texas Baptists are at their best when they walk lock-step with Jesus and are filled with the Holy Spirit. Texas Baptists are at their best when they are communicating the good news of Jesus and leading people of all kinds from everywhere to draw closer together with him.

I enjoyed my time with you this week and look forward to meeting again. Until then, let us both draw closer together with Jesus and so grow closer together with each other.

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