

SOUTHERN BAPTIST  
**TEXAN**

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# WORTH THE RISK

GOSPEL OUTWEIGHS ALL OTHER FACTORS  
FOR CHURCH PLANTS ACROSS TEXAS

Q&A WITH SBTC  
PRESIDENT TODD KAUNITZ

'Prayer changed everything  
about our church'

GETTING CREATIVE  
ABOUT CREATION

Grade-schooler uses animation app to  
share God's truth with new generation



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ANNUAL  
MEETING

# A challenge to celebrate, consider, and commit



In August, 50 pastors went to New York to study and learn about developing a culture of prayer from Jim Cymbala, pastor of the Brooklyn Tabernacle. **SBTC PHOTO**

**C**an you believe how fast 2022 is flying by? It seems like just yesterday we were embracing the new year with anticipation. This year has been great so far. We have witnessed God move in incredible ways across Texas. As I reflect on all that God has done, is doing, and we believe will continue to do, allow me to give three brief encouragements to you:

## Celebrate

God is doing something among you! He is always at work. I encourage you to find those things and celebrate them in your life and in your church. At the SBTC, we are celebrating God doing great things through a couple of pastors' trips over the summer. In July, the SBTC led 128 pastors and wives to Israel. This was an awesome time of seeing the Bible come alive. We had great opportunities to worship, fellowship, network, and learn together.

In August, 50 pastors went to New York together to study and learn about developing a culture of prayer. We spent time with and learned from prayer leader and pastor Jim Cymbala of the Brooklyn Tabernacle. This church is known around the world for its prayer ministry. Again, it was an incredible time of worship, prayer, networking, and equipping.

## Consider

If you are an SBTC pastor, I would like you to consider a very special invitation. On July 17-26, 2023, I will be leading a pastors trip to Greece to "Walk in the Footsteps of Paul." This will be an unbelievable opportunity to see much of the New Testament come to life. You will not only learn and go deeper in the study of the Scriptures, but you will connect with other pastors and build meaningful relationships along the way.

We have been able to work with our tour company to get the trip costs down significantly. The trip for a pastor is only \$3,199, and spouses are \$3,499. However, thanks to a generous grant provided by the SBTC Executive Board, pastors who have never been on a trip in the footsteps of Paul will be able to go for \$1,999, and an even greater discount is available if your spouse travels with you. Space for this trip will be limited and grants will be given on a first-come, first-served basis until all the scholarship funds are allocated. The trip is restricted to two pastors per church and one grant per church. You can e-mail Randi Kent at [rkent@sbtexas.com](mailto:rkent@sbtexas.com) for more information. I hope you will consider experiencing this opportunity with us!

## Commit

Our 2022 SBTC Annual Meeting is just around the corner, November 14-15 in Corpus Christi. We are anticipating a great meeting as churches from across Texas join together in worship, prayer, preaching, and celebrating all God is doing (and yes, we will do a little business, as well). The first session on Monday evening will culminate with a prayer service. We are anticipating a powerful night together. Over the two days, you will hear stories of how God is moving across Texas. You will also hear some future vision and goals for seeing a prayer movement across the churches of the SBTC. It is going to be a great time together. I pray you will clear your calendar and commit to being a part of our Annual Meeting. More details can be found at [sbtexas.com/am22](http://sbtexas.com/am22).

One of my favorite things is to tell the story of how God is using SBTC churches to "Reach Texas and Impact the World." I love hearing from you and celebrating alongside you. I consider it a real joy and honor to serve you and to serve alongside our team at the SBTC. Please know that I love you and believe in you! I look forward to seeing you in Corpus Christi.

Dr. Nathan Lorick  
SBTC Executive Director



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# So much more than Sunday morning

**A** strong, late summer thunderstorm blew through the Metroplex one afternoon a few weeks ago. I watched it from my office window, and it seemed to leave just as quickly as it came.

Even after the storm had moved on, I found myself staring out my window taking notice of little details that usually elude me because I'm so focused on my work. I watched the remnants of the storm clouds give way to clear blue sky. A bright red cardinal hopped from branch to branch in the tree right outside the window. I noticed the way the droplets left by the rain were resting on—and slowly rolling off—the dark green leaves on that same tree.

I was soon interrupted by a strained feeling from within telling me I needed to get back to work, but I allowed myself to stand there a few moments longer because I realized something that I wish I remembered more often: in those moments of marveling at the wonder of nature, I was worshipping. So before sitting back down at my desk, I thanked God for the tiny, beautiful things not only that He has created, but that He allows me to see.

Worship is so much more than the time when we sing songs during a Sunday morning church service. Worship is maintaining a mindset of gratitude and awe toward the Lord all day every day. Worship can (and should) happen all over the place—in the car, at the ballpark, at a dinner table with friends.

Psalm 150:1-2 says this:

*Hallelujah!*

*Praise God in His sanctuary.*

*Praise Him in His mighty expanse.*

*Praise Him for His powerful acts;*

*Praise Him for His abundant greatness.*

Based on this passage, here are four ways you can worship God all day every day:

## **Worship Him by gathering with others**

I've said it before, but it's worth repeating: in a culture and at a time when we are more connected than ever through technology, our hearts have never been further apart from one another. Be intentional about gathering with God's people "in His sanctuary" as often as possible, but also be present in each other's homes and lives. We prove to be Jesus' disciples when we love one another in such ways.

## **Worship Him through what He has created**

Take time to stare out the window and notice all that God has created. The power and character of God, Paul writes in Romans, is "clearly seen ... through what He has made." But are you taking time to experience it, look at it, breathe it in?

## **Worship Him through testimony**

What "powerful acts" have you seen God do lately in your life or in the lives of others? The problem is not that God isn't at work—He is always at work. The challenge is in taking time to count your blessings and name them one by one, to Him in prayer and to others when you gather.

## **Worship Him for all His greatness**

God is patient. God is kind. God is mighty above all things. God speaks and it is so. God is for you! Spend regular time telling God, and anyone else who will listen, how great He is.

"Attention," author John Mark Comer once wrote, "is the beginning of devotion." What will you choose to focus on today? To whom will you give your attention?



# Blessing your pastor during Pastor Appreciation Month

I love pastors. They bear the weighty burden of caring for our souls (Hebrews 13:17). On top of that burden is more than two-and-a-half years of COVID craziness that has made pastoral work even more complicated. With October being designated Pastor Appreciation Month, I offer these ideas to honor those who have remained faithful through it all:



01

### Give him a “book tree”

How you create “the tree” is up to you, but the leaves are all Amazon or Logos gift cards. Every pastor I know wants more books, and every one would like more funds to get them. If each of your church families gives \$10 or \$20, that gift would likely be substantial. If you want to delight your pastor in an unexpected way, give gift cards to his wife and children, too. None of them will forget that gesture.

02

### Give him an extra week of vacation in 2023

These past few years truly have been exhausting, and most pastors are still figuring out how to shepherd a post-COVID congregation. It takes many of us most of our vacation to unwind anyway, so your pastor might especially welcome an extra week next year. In fact, I encourage you to consider offering your pastor a one-month sabbatical next year if he has served faithfully for a number of years.

03

### Give him and his family a local gym membership

We want our pastors to be healthy and serve us for many years. Frankly, many pastors need to get more exercise—and perhaps they will be more diligent in self-care if our congregations give them this gift. If your pastor already has a personal membership (but not a family one), at least cover the cost of adding his family. Even better, do that, and cover the total cost for another year.

04

### Give him and his wife a trip to Israel

I still remember my first trip there as a teenager (a long time ago), and I recognize today that my Bible reading has never been the same since then. My wife traveled with me for the first time several years ago—because of the generosity of other believers—and she still talks about her experience there. If your pastor and his wife have been to Israel, think about sending them to the area of Paul’s journeys.

*Editor’s note: The SBTC will lead a “Walk in the Footsteps of Paul” trip in 2023. E-mail [rkent@sbtexas.com](mailto:rkent@sbtexas.com) for more info.*

05

### Give him the gift of your greater investment in the work of your church

As a shepherd myself, I would be most honored by a member who says to me, “Pastor, out of love for the Lord and gratitude for you, I want to be more faithful in serving through our church. How might I serve that most helps you or our ministries?” My guess is this gift will surprise—and bless—your pastor.



*Chuck Lawless is dean of doctoral studies and vice president of spiritual formation and ministry centers at Southeastern Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C. For more from Lawless, visit [chucklawless.com](http://chucklawless.com).*

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# Sending is in their DNA

## CITYVIEW IS WELL ON ITS WAY TO GOAL OF PLANTING 100 CHURCHES IN 25 YEARS

### PEARLAND

**C**ityView Church launched in February 2014 with a mission to multiply.

Since its inception, the church has sent out 12 planters to start churches throughout Houston and the surrounding communities including Alvin, Friendswood, Pearland, Tomball, plus Brazoria and Montgomery counties.

“For us, the goal is to make disciples of Jesus and to plant 100 churches in 25 years in the Houston area. That’s our vision statement,” said pastor and planter Jason Crandall, who also serves as church planting consultant for Send Network SBTC.

“We saw the growth of Houston ... neighborhoods springing up everywhere,” Crandall said, noting that the name CityView suggests the church’s goal of planting neighborhood churches within the view of the city.

Currently, the church has its 13th resident planter in training. As many as three planters at a time have undergone CityView’s assessment and preparation process, Crandall said.

“When we don’t have one for a period of time, our church just kind of lags a little bit,” Crandall said. “It’s part of our DNA that we’re always going to have someone with us getting ready to be sent out by us as a church plant.”

Some of CityView’s plants have remained small, with COVID limiting



growth at times. But West Oaks Church in West Columbia-Brazoria County runs some 200 weekly, despite being less than three years old.

Its emphasis on planting has given CityView a unique growth curve, Crandall said. Currently, the church runs about 140-150. When numbers reach that level, it’s time to plant another congregation.

“We grow for a while. Then we send a planter with some people. Then we grow for a while,” he said. The cycle repeats as attendance again approaches 200.

CityView recently moved into its own building, a welcome relief from “eight-and-a-half years of set up and tear down,” Crandall added.

The church has devoted five percent of its tithes and offerings from the beginning directly for Houston-area church planting, funds separate from Cooperative Program and associational giving, the pastor said, adding, “We decided we were going to live on less and see the gospel go.”

Once CityView Church grows to about 200 in attendance, it’s time to send out a trained planter with some members to fulfill the church’s vision of planting 100 churches in 25 years in the Houston area.



# Building a Legacy

## NATIVE TEXAN COMES HOME TO PLANT IN ONE OF THE FASTEST-GROWING CITIES IN THE STATE

### CELINA

**A**s planters peruse demographics studies to research where churches are needed most, Celina's statistics scream out from the page.

It's easily one of the fastest-growing cities in the Texas. Five years ago, Celina had roughly 10,000 residents. Today, the population has more than tripled to slightly fewer than 40,000 people. That kind of growth is expected to continue for years to come, with some estimating the population in this once-tiny town to touch 160,000 by the end of the decade.

Those statistics tugged heavily at the heart of Robert Welch, a native Texan who returned home earlier this year to plant in Celina after serving three-and-a-half years as senior pastor of First Baptist Church of Charlotte (N.C.).

Welch noted Celina has only two established Southern Baptists of Texas Convention churches—three once Legacy Hills launches. So the need for churches is already great.

"In a community like this, you've got to have churches to serve and reach all those people," he said. "Celina deserves churches that will come and say, 'This is our Jerusalem and we're going to reach this city. What you're seeing here isn't just [people moving away from the Metroplex]. They're coming here from all over. There's an Asian population



here, an Indian population here. There's a California migration happening here."

Robert and Kyla Welch with their children Hudson, Hayden, and Hadlee.

Welch said Legacy Hills is scheduled to hold its first "monthly preview service" this month, which will include worship, a sermon, and activities for families. Those monthly services will continue each month until February, when the church plans to begin meeting weekly at an elementary school.

Until then, he and his family—which includes two teenagers and a grade-schooler—will continue to sink deep roots into the North Texas soil. Legacy Hills has already made inroads in the community by giving gift cards to every teacher in the school district and buying ice cream for unsuspecting patrons at a local shop.

"Not to take away from the established churches I've previously led, but this is the most challenging thing I've ever done," Welch said. "But what God has called us to here, and going on this journey as a family ... it's just been humbling and incredibly rewarding and fun."





# Boldly going where others won't

## JOHN 4 MINDSET PROPELS THE WEST CHURCH INTO DIFFICULT NEIGHBORHOOD

### HOUSTON

**T**he southwest Houston neighborhood of Alief ranks among the highest nationwide for prostitution, and crime is high. The community lacks resources—both money and mentors—yet it's the very place God has called The West Church to minister, propelled by Jesus' encounter in Samaria recorded in John 4.

"A lot of people drive around the neighborhood in order to get to other places, but we sensed the Lord was calling us to not go around it but go toward it," Ayo Omopariola, pastor of The West Church, said.

Omopariola was born in Nigeria and has lived in the U.S. since he was five. He and his wife, Amaechi, were part of a church plant years ago and remember it as a formative, "wonderful" time, he said. While he was serving as a church planting resident at City Church in Houston, God stirred his heart about Alief.

"The Lord started a work within our hearts to want to see that part of the city be transformed by the gospel," Omopariola said.

The West Church started meeting on Zoom for monthly prayer calls during the pandemic. Each person on the call would share a verse, and the group would pray. After about eight months, they started interacting in the community, mainly asking people questions. The core group wanted to learn how people in Alief viewed church.

"God has been at work in this community for a very, very long time," Omopariola said, "so we weren't starting a new work. We wanted to find out what the Lord had already been doing."



Despite the difficulty of the neighborhood, some groups had been working faithfully to reach it for years. They allowed The West Church to use their facilities, and they met Omopariola for coffee to answer questions.

The church hosted a vision meeting at a stadium in Alief in July 2021, and then they launched a Bible study that slowly picked up attendees. In January of this year, they launched at Best Elementary School in Houston with about 25 people. Now they have about 115.

"Outreach is such an integral part of what we do," Omopariola said. "We've been able to build a lot of relationships with people in the community"

The West Church has in a way adopted Best Elementary, the pastor said, ministering to the faculty, staff, and students. Church members have been mentoring students, building bridges which lead to reaching families.

Ayo Omopariola and his wife, Amaechi, along with their three children, are leading The West Church to share the hope of the gospel in Alief, a difficult neighborhood in Houston.

**PHOTOS SUBMITTED**



After about five months of ministering at the school, The West Church received an award of appreciation from Best Elementary, Omopariola said.

The church also partners with The Landing, an anti-trafficking organization in the neighborhood. “They’ve been one of our biggest advocates in the community, and a lot of our missional outreach is in large part due to the relationship we have with them,” he said.

West Groups, the small group ministry at The West Church, has been “a source of life and community,” the pastor said. “We’ve been so impacted not only by what the Lord has been doing in the church but also outside of it.”

So why has John 4 become the missional thrust of the church? Omopariola says it is because Jesus viewed it as a divine necessity to enter a place so many avoided. Samaria, like Alief, was a place with so many difficulties, yet Jesus engaged in a theological conversation with a woman there in order to show His care for all people.

“She isn’t ashamed or even talked down to, but she’s encouraged to want to live a different life, and as a result of that, she becomes one of the greatest evangelists in the New Testament because after her interaction with Jesus she goes back to her community and tells them, ‘Come see a man who told me everything I’ve ever done,’”

Omopariola said.

Alief is a community that has been neglected by most, but The West Church is striving to “bring the love and light of Christ into the community and be able to point people toward hope,” the pastor said.

“Our church is slowly starting to resemble the diversity that is around us,” Omopariola said. “It’s going to be a long process, but we want to see the reality of John 4 in our church.”

So far the response from people in the community has been positive toward the church, the pastor said, particularly because they sense church members are authentic about what they believe and how they practice those beliefs. “Surprisingly, they want more of it.”

For churches that want to reach out to hard communities, Omopariola advises developing a strong prayer strategy first.

“The needs are so great, and you feel overwhelmed all the time,” he said, “like there’s no way one single individual or one church or organization is going to be able to solve all the problems.”

The West Church, meeting at Best Elementary School, is reaching Alief, an underserved neighborhood in southwest Houston. To them, it’s a modern-day Samaria in need of love.



# Finding a new front door

## CORPUS CHURCH ACCOMPLISHING MISSION THROUGH COMMUNITY GROUPS EMPHASIS

### CORPUS CHRISTI

**T**hird Coast Church operates on the principle that “there are a lot more front doors to the church than the front door to the church,” said planter and pastor Joe McArthur. Each member’s home is a front door, an “extension of the church in the neighborhood.”

This philosophy has led to steady growth for Third Coast, even during COVID.

The Corpus church started seven years ago with community groups rather than a typical Sunday launch. By the time Third Coast met for its first official Sunday worship in 2016, 100 people had already been engaged in groups for a year.

Today, community groups remain at the heart of Third Coast. Facilitated by trained leaders, groups meet weekly and include Bible study, relationship building, and outreach. Studies are approved by the church, with RightNow Media providing much of the material.

“We value and love Sunday worship,” McArthur said, but “it’s not the ultimate with us,” adding that there are more people engaged in community groups than attend on the weekends.

“We are commanded to be together, but it’s not the only thing we are called to do ... to get together on Sunday. We are called to do life together,” McArthur said. In Scripture, Jesus visits the home of Zacchaeus, he explained. “[People] don’t have to get introduced to God at a weekend service.”

The atypical model proved a blessing during COVID, when the church grew by 20 percent.

“COVID was the great equalizer,” McArthur said. “Our system worked,” he added. The emphasis on community encouraged continuity, growth, and evangelism as groups met needs among neigh-



bors facing pandemic losses and struggles.

A preacher’s kid whose father pastored small Baptist churches, McArthur toured with bands as a drummer during his 20s. Now 45, he brought two decades of experience in pastoral ministry to the Third Coast Church plant, serving in various roles at Bay Area Fellowship, now named Church Unlimited. He was also senior pastor of Keller Harvest (now Journey) Church.

Today, Third Coast meets in space leased from a Corpus school. Attendance runs 200 with small group involvement 120 percent of that.

Whether growing up in a church of 75 or helping lead a church of 8,000, McArthur has observed that “the gospel sticks best when it’s done through relationships.”

(Top) Joe and Melissa McArthur, here shown with children Molly and Jonah, returned to the Gulf Coast to plant Third Coast in 2015.

(Bottom) Community groups form the core of ministry for Third Coast, which started with such groups rather than an official Sunday launch.



# SHOEBOX GIFTS GO EVEN WHERE THERE IS NO ROAD

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## FACES OF THE FAITHFUL

This month, we asked the wives of church planters to share their victories, challenges, and ways our convention can be praying for them

**Angela Napier**  
Age: **37**  
Spouse/Children:  
**Ryan/Noah & Allie**



Church/Years at Current Church:  
**Freedom Hill Church, San Antonio (4)**  
Total Years in Ministry: **18**

**WHAT IS SOMETHING YOU'VE BEEN ABLE TO CELEBRATE AT YOUR CHURCH RECENTLY?**

In the past nine months, we have launched a youth group, which averages 20+ teens, we launched eight life groups averaging 60 attendees, and we hosted our first Vacation Bible School. In July, we took 18 teens to youth camp for the first time and six gave their lives to Christ!

**WHAT'S ONE THING YOU WANT TO SEE GOD DO SPECIFICALLY IN YOUR CHURCH THIS YEAR?**

In February 2021, we had three buildings flood during a snowstorm, and due to the abundance of work the local contractors were inundated with, it has been a very slow process to complete. We are praying for this project to be completed this year so we can move our kids' programs into this new space!

**HOW CAN OTHER SBTC CHURCHES BE PRAYING FOR YOU?**

I would specifically ask for prayer in the area of rest and a renewed focus. Planting a church during a pandemic, and then undergoing a huge remodel (due to the flooding), while trying to launch ministries and maintain communication with members and visitors has proven to be very taxing on us both physically and emotionally.

**Ashley Millar**  
Age: **32**  
Spouse/Children:  
**Chris/Caleb (5)  
& Ella Grace (3)**



Church/Years at Current Church:  
**The Well Community Church, San Marcos (2)**  
Total Years in Ministry: **8**

**WHAT'S ONE LESSON YOU'VE LEARNED TO THIS POINT OF YOUR MINISTRY THAT YOU KNOW YOU'LL NEVER FORGET?**

One lesson that God has been teaching me this year is that I will not be satisfied by anything else but Him. When my heart and my eyes focus on other gifts that He has given (my children, husband, vacations, church, etc.) and turn away from Him, not even the best gifts can bring me the joy and peace found in walking with Him.

**WHAT'S ONE THING YOU WANT TO SEE GOD DO SPECIFICALLY IN YOUR CHURCH THIS YEAR?**

We are asking God to raise up even more student leaders who have a passion for sharing Jesus with the students at Texas State to make Him known. We are also asking God to save our neighbors and have parents change the trajectory of generations to come by knowing Christ as their Lord.

**HOW CAN OTHER SBTC CHURCHES BE PRAYING FOR YOU?**

Please be praying for spiritual protection and for endurance through trials at The Well. We have experienced so much spiritual warfare the past three years and know that the prayers of the saints and the grace of God have carried us through.

**Elizabeth Leftwich**  
Age: **41**  
Spouse/Children:  
**Jonathan/Ethan,  
Kara, Megan & Ellie**



Church/Years at Current Church:  
**Hope Church, Rockport (2)**  
Total Years in Ministry: **20**

**WHAT IS SOMETHING YOU'VE BEEN ABLE TO CELEBRATE AT YOUR CHURCH RECENTLY?**

God is raising up more volunteers to serve the church in all areas and community. We have had over 50 baptisms at Hope Church, as well, since our launch!

**WHAT'S ONE LESSON YOU'VE LEARNED TO THIS POINT OF YOUR MINISTRY THAT YOU KNOW YOU'LL NEVER FORGET?**

The biggest lesson I have learned is that this is not our ministry—it is God's handiwork! We are humbled to be a part of it and must daily submit the plans and growth of it to Him and ask Him for strength and wisdom.

**HOW CAN OTHER SBTC CHURCHES BE PRAYING FOR YOU?**

Pray for wisdom and strength as each new growth and challenge comes and for unity among staff and the church as we follow after the Lord. And as always, you can pray for the pastors and staff kids as they learn to live out their faith in school while serving in church and being teenagers that are sometimes labeled.

### Emily Clair Brunson

Age: 29

Spouse/Children:

**Alec/Knox (2) & Adeline Wren (1)**

Church/Years at Current Church:

**Pillar Church, Conroe (4 months)**

Total Years in Ministry: 7



#### WHAT'S ONE LESSON YOU'VE LEARNED TO THIS POINT OF YOUR MINISTRY THAT YOU KNOW YOU'LL NEVER FORGET?

Our church, our friends, even strangers are going to have a million different thoughts and suggestions on how to build a healthy, thriving church, and it is wise to listen and consider those. A huge lesson I'm learning is knowing I can truly trust that God is building our church, and not carry that burden alone.

#### WHAT'S ONE THING YOU WANT TO SEE GOD DO SPECIFICALLY IN YOUR CHURCH THIS YEAR?

I am praying for the people of our church to live unhurried lives. We live in an area where people don't really "need" God—they have all the comforts of the world around them. I pray our people would grow weary of our earthly comforts and cling to Christ.

#### HOW CAN OTHER SBTC CHURCHES BE PRAYING FOR YOU?

Please pray for my husband to wait and rely on the Lord; for our church to have a deeper knowledge of who God is and His character; for our neighborhood and for people to come to know Christ and join the local church! Please pray for God to continue to reveal and direct us in every way.

### Stephanie Martinez

Age: 47

Spouse/Children:

**James/Hannah (18), Caleb (16), Haddie (14) & David (13)**

Church/Years at Current Church:

**Ecclesia Community Church, Brownsville (2)**

Total Years in Ministry: 22



#### WHAT IS SOMETHING YOU'VE BEEN ABLE TO CELEBRATE AT YOUR CHURCH RECENTLY?

We are seeing God grow our church through community outreaches and food/clothing ministry. New families are visiting our church on a regular basis and lives are being changed!

#### WHAT'S ONE LESSON YOU'VE LEARNED TO THIS POINT OF YOUR MINISTRY THAT YOU KNOW YOU'LL NEVER FORGET?

Church planting can seem daunting with all the unknowns that come along with it. God has moved in so many ways through these first years of laboring and sowing, and I have learned a powerful lesson: He can, He will, and He is making a way for us to do what He asked us to do.

#### HOW CAN OTHER SBTC CHURCHES BE PRAYING FOR YOU?

Pray for leaders to be raised up in our church and for the gospel to transform our community.

### Heather Law

Age: 46

Spouse/Children:

**Nathan/6 children**

Church/Years at Current Church:

**Renovation City Church, Pearland (3)**

Total Years in Ministry: 25



#### WHAT'S ONE LESSON YOU'VE LEARNED TO THIS POINT OF YOUR MINISTRY THAT YOU KNOW YOU'LL NEVER FORGET?

I need to look to Christ and not to the circumstances around me. In ministry, there will inevitably be messy situations ... but when I focus on my risen Savior instead of situations around me, something supernatural happens.

#### WHAT'S ONE THING YOU WANT TO SEE GOD DO SPECIFICALLY IN YOUR CHURCH THIS YEAR?

I desire for us to be a like-minded, unified team rooted in the love of our Father. I pray the reality of knowing there are people who have not heard the gospel and experienced His grace would draw us together as the body of Christ and we would be of one mind.

#### HOW CAN OTHER SBTC CHURCHES BE PRAYING FOR YOU?

Pray our family would be drawn closer to Christ as we plant RCC together; for our core team to be unified by the sacrificial love of Christ; for God to prepare the hearts and minds of people throughout Houston to hear the gospel; that God would continue to provide for our family and RCC—He has been so faithful as our sustainer in every season; that, as a church, we would take every opportunity to share the love of Christ with others; and that God would use our church to reach the nations.

### Tiffany Johnson

Age: 42

Spouse/Children:

**Ed/Desirae (11) & Gabrielle (4)**

Church/Years at Current Church:

**Harvest Fellowship Baptist Church, Desoto (5)**

Total Years in Ministry: 20



#### WHAT IS SOMETHING YOU'VE BEEN ABLE TO CELEBRATE AT YOUR CHURCH RECENTLY?

We recently celebrated Harvest's five-year anniversary. We invited all of our members to a local ranch for a day of food, fellowship, and fun! We praise God for allowing us to reach this milestone as a church plant.

#### WHAT'S ONE LESSON YOU'VE LEARNED TO THIS POINT OF YOUR MINISTRY THAT YOU KNOW YOU'LL NEVER FORGET?

As much as I love our Harvest family, my husband and children always come first. One lesson I've learned is to make it a priority to designate time for them.

#### HOW CAN OTHER SBTC CHURCHES BE PRAYING FOR YOU?

Pray that Christ is shown in everything I do.

# PURSUING *Presence*

Jeremiah 29:12-14

## ‘We are primed and ready for the next great revival’



### THE PATH THERE, SBTC PRESIDENT SAYS, IS PRAYER—WHICH WILL TAKE CENTER STAGE AT ANNUAL MEETING

**A** couple of years ago, Todd Kaunitz—pastor of New Beginnings Baptist Church in Longview and president of the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention—was weathering a season of personal discouragement when he decided to make prayer a priority at his church. Only God could do what the church experienced as a result. As he prepares to encourage churches across the state to make a stronger commitment to prayer at this year’s annual meeting, Kaunitz spoke with the Texan about how churches lose focus on prayer, and how prayer has not only changed his church, but himself.

**IN AN INTERVIEW WITH THE TEXAN ALMOST A YEAR AGO, YOU TALKED ABOUT LEADING YOUR CHURCH TO REFOCUS ON PRAYER. WHAT ARE SOME WAYS PRAYER HAS SPECIFICALLY CHANGED YOUR CHURCH OVER THE PAST YEAR?**

**TODD KAUNITZ:** I would say it has changed everything about our church. We are sensing a deeper unity as a result of pursuing the Lord in prayer. We have seen a greater dependency [on the Lord] by our church members and going to the Lord in prayer with boldness. We’ve seen God answer prayers in ways that have really emboldened our church to be more prayerful. When you call on God’s name and He answers, that answered prayer is a faith-builder. But the biggest thing we have seen through this experience has been seeing how the power of the presence of God shapes us. It takes His Word and embeds it into our heart. You just sense it when you come on our campus. There’s just a different presence that we have that wasn’t here before we began to pray.

**HOW HAS THIS EXPERIENCE OF GETTING LASER-FOCUSED ON PRAYER SHAPED YOU PERSONALLY? WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE PRESENCE OF GOD NOW THAT YOU DIDN’T KNOW 18 MONTHS AGO?**

**TK:** I’m learning really for the first time what it looks like to be dependent upon the Holy Spirit, how to pursue the presence of God and experience the Spirit’s work in my life through prayer. When it comes to the things that pastors naturally go through—the fatigue, the anxiety, the stress, the burden—it’s not as if all of those things have gone away. But through

this season of pursuing the presence of the Lord, there's a perspective that I've gained. The things that used to floor me and level me and maybe crush me emotionally ... it's almost as if—the old hymn says, “Turn your eyes upon Jesus, look full in His wonderful face, and the things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of His glory and grace”—that's kind of what I've experienced. The more I encounter the presence of God, the more of what is important to Him becomes important to me. A lot of the trivial stuff that used to keep me up at night just doesn't anymore. Spiritually, God has strengthened me.

### **WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST THREATS TO PRAYER IN THE CHURCH TODAY? HOW DO CHURCHES LOSE THAT CRITICAL FOCUS?**

**TK:** I think we live in a consumer age of the church, and in the consumer age of the church, we spend more time focusing on the product we're producing than the presence and the power of God needed to make disciples, to grow men and women spiritually, and to reach more people for Christ. We spend way too much time in our church culture buying and selling methods of doing church, which the early church in Acts didn't have. They didn't have the bookstores and all of the commentaries and the church growth strategies. They had the gospel and they had the Holy Spirit and they spent time in prayer.

I'm a big strategy guy. I think having a strategy and a plan honors the Lord. But I think we can become so strategized and so focused on methods that we have completely just programmed the Holy Spirit out of our churches. What we need to do is get on our face before the Lord and cry out to Him. God did more through a praying church—120 believers in the upper room in the book of Acts accomplished more with no training, no conferences, no methods in just a short amount of time than most churches will ever accomplish in the history of the church, [yet] we have all of these tools and resources. So I think it's that—becoming too man-dependent and not enough Holy Spirit-dependent.

### **IN CONSIDERATION OF THIS YEAR'S THEME OF “PURSUING PRESENCE,” WHY DO YOU THINK IT IS IMPORTANT FOR CHURCHES TO ATTEND THE ANNUAL MEETING?**

**TK:** I think first and foremost, the annual meeting is a great opportunity for our network of churches to come together and just be encouraged by fellowship,

by preaching, and by rejoicing and celebrating the great things that we're able to see God do as we partner together cooperatively to advance the gospel.

Secondly, I truly believe we are at a crisis moment in the history of the church in America. By and large, if you look at the landscape of our culture, the power of the Holy Spirit is no longer resting on many of our churches. I believe we are primed and ready for another Great Awakening. We are primed and ready for the next great revival. Apart from prayer and apart from us coming to the end of ourselves and calling on the name of Lord, we will not see revival and we will not see that awakening. But because of the spiritual condition of our nation and many of our churches, we are primed for it. This annual meeting, we are praying that as we challenge churches and as we come together as a convention for the purpose of prayer and learning what it looks like to pursue the presence of God, that it just might be a catalyst that sparks revival—not just in our convention, but in our entire state and in our nation.

We need revival. We need the Holy Spirit to be poured out afresh on our churches, because that is what revival is. Revival isn't just the lost being saved, although revival leads to that. Revival is a reawakening of the body of Christ through a manifestation of the Holy Spirit pouring Himself afresh upon the churches. We can't manufacture revival. We can't create it. We can't program it. We can't strategize it. But what we can do, we can put ourselves before the Lord in prayer and seek His face for it. And while we can't manufacture revival, we can miss revival if we don't seek His face and we don't call on His name and we don't pray.

So I would want all pastors in our state to really examine their own ministries and ask themselves a question: if they don't have a weekly prayer meeting where their people are gathering specifically to call on the name of the Lord and invite the presence of God to move in their church and pray for revival in all the churches, what would keep them from rearranging their schedule? Would they be willing to make adjustments to whatever programming they have going on to make space for the people of God to gather for the sole purpose of calling on the name of the Lord and inviting His presence to move like never before?

That's really what it means to pursue presence. It is to chase after the presence of God like our life depends upon it, because it does.

# PURSUING *Presence*

Jeremiah 29:12-14

## PRAYER MEETING AMONG THE HIGHLIGHTS AT THIS YEAR'S ANNUAL MEETING

The Monday evening session of this year's annual meeting will feature a prayer gathering that leaders are saying will be a powerful opportunity for the churches of the SBTC to spend time not only talking about this year's theme, "Pursuing Presence," but actually calling out to the Lord together.

The corporate prayer meeting will begin at 7:55 p.m. Monday, capping the day's activities. The meeting will include prayer, encouragement, and a challenge for the churches of the SBTC to begin a corporate prayer initiative in their local contexts, SBTC Executive Director Nathan Lorick said.

"It's going to be an incredible gathering where churches from all across Texas come together to celebrate all that God is doing and to look together in anticipation of what God wants to do," Lorick said.



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## KAUNITZ TO BE NOMINATED FOR SECOND TERM AS SBTC PRESIDENT

Caleb Turner, co-pastor of Mesquite Friendship Baptist Church, has announced his intention to nominate Todd Kaunitz to serve a second term as president of the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention at this year's annual meeting in Corpus Christi.

Kaunitz is lead pastor of New Beginnings Baptist Church in Longview. He was first elected to serve as SBTC president on November 9, 2021, at the convention's annual meeting in Flint. He and his wife,

Adrian, have three children.

"I have had the privilege of serving alongside Todd for a number of years and have personally seen how God has worked in and through him in a number of ways," said Turner, who serves as vice chairman of the SBTC Executive Board. "Our great convention is truly blessed to have faithful and capable leaders like him."

New Beginnings contributed \$103,217 through the Cooperative Program in 2020. The church's CP giving in 2021 was \$112,500.

## MEALS & EVENTS

American Bank Center, Corpus Christi  
Meal registration is required at [sbtexas.com/am22](https://sbtexas.com/am22).

### SUNDAY

#### Spanish Session & Reception

6:00-9:30 p.m.

### MONDAY

#### Interim Pastor Equipping

9:00-3:00 p.m.

#### En Español Lunch Panel

12:00-2:00 p.m.

#### Missional Ministries Dinner

4:45-6:00 p.m.

Come meet your Missional Ministries team and hear about the gospel work being done in Texas and beyond. Special guest speaker is Bryant Wright, president of SEND Relief for the North American Mission Board.

#### Regenesis Dinner/Church Revitalization

4:45-6:00 p.m.

Each church can benefit from a time of spiritual renewal and rebirth. The SBTC has launched a new strategy with the exclusive goal to help jumpstart this Regenesis process in your church. Join the Church Health & Leadership team for a time of encouragement, good food, and to learn more about this exciting opportunity!

#### Young Pastors Network Late Night

9:00-10:30 p.m.

Dessert reception and conversation with SBC President Bart Barber.

### TUESDAY

#### SBTC Disaster Relief Taco Truck

7:30-8:45 a.m.

#### Alumni & Friends Seminary Breakfasts

7:30-8:45 a.m.

#### President's Lunch

12:00-1:30 p.m.

Guest speaker Bill Elliff is a frequent conference speaker, writer, and consultant to churches drawing from his 50+ years of pastoring and revival ministry. This will be very special time as Bill speaks to the churches of the SBTC on the history of revival and spiritual awakenings, continuing our theme of Pursuing Presence. Attendees will also have an opportunity for Q&A. Complimentary box lunch provided to all attendees.



## RESOLUTIONS

Resolutions give convention messengers an opportunity to discuss, refine, and express a consensus voice on a current issue. While resolutions are non-binding on convention churches, they do add substance to current conversations in Baptist life and the culture at large. Any member of an SBTC church may submit a resolution to the resolutions committee for consideration. The committee considers these suggestions and prepares a slate of resolutions for messengers to consider at the annual meeting.

Submitters are encouraged to view previous SBTC resolutions for style and recent content at [sbtexas.com/resolutions](https://sbtexas.com/resolutions). The 2022 resolutions committee will receive resolutions for consideration from Wednesday September 21, to Wednesday, October 19. All submissions must include the name, church membership, phone number, and email address of the submitter. Email proposed resolutions to Jenna Griffis at [jgriffis@sbtexas.com](mailto:jgriffis@sbtexas.com).

## HANDOUTS & MATERIALS

Only SBTC ministries and approved exhibitors may hand out material to the messenger body on the premises hosting the annual meeting.

# PURSUING *Presence*

Jeremiah 29:12-14

## Annual Meeting Hotels

### **Omni Corpus Christi**

Room Rate: \$111  
900 North Shoreline Blvd.  
Corpus Christi, TX 78401  
361-887-1600  
King or Double (limited availability)  
Cut-off: October 24

### **Holiday Inn Corpus Downtown Marina**

Room Rate: \$115  
707 N. Shoreline Blvd.  
Corpus Christi, TX 78401  
361-882-1700  
King or Double  
Cut-off: October 16

### **Residence Inn by Marriott**

Room Rate: \$169-\$189  
309 S. Shoreline Blvd.  
Corpus Christi, TX 78401  
361-904-0090  
\$169 Studio King  
\$189 Studio Queen  
Cut-off: October 13

### **Group Rates**

Specify SBTC for group rates  
when making any hotel reservations.

Room block rates are only guaranteed until  
the cut-off date listed. Please contact the  
hotels directly for availability and pricing.

### **CHILDCARE**

Childcare is available at  
[sbtexas.com/am22childcare](http://sbtexas.com/am22childcare).

### **HOUSING ASSISTANCE**

Senior pastors with financial  
need may request hotel  
cost assistance by visiting  
[sbtexas.com/am22housing](http://sbtexas.com/am22housing).

### **QUESTIONS?**

Email [aminfo@sbtexas.com](mailto:aminfo@sbtexas.com)  
or call 817-552-2500.

+ [SBTEXAS.COM/AM22](http://SBTEXAS.COM/AM22)

# PURSUING *Presence*

Jeremiah 29:12-14

## At a Glance

Messengers to the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention will gather for a powerful time of prayer, worship, and fellowship at the American Bank Center November 14-15 at the convention's annual meeting.

### American Bank Center

1901 N Shoreline Blvd • Corpus Christi, TX 78401

#### Spanish Session

Sunday Evening 6:00–8:30 p.m.  
Reception 8:30–9:30 p.m.

#### Main Sessions

Monday Evening 6:30–9:00 p.m.  
Tuesday Morning 9:00–11:50 a.m.  
Tuesday Afternoon 1:45–4:45 p.m.

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## Lopez featured at AM22 Spanish Session

Join other Spanish-speaking congregations on Sunday evening, Nov. 13, at the American Bank Center for a time of worship and fellowship starting at 6:00 p.m. The session will feature guest speaker Luis Lopez. Luis leads the Hispanic relations and mobilization initiative for the Southern Baptist Convention. He has a long history of multiplying and engaging Hispanic congregations among Southern Baptists to reach the lost and advance the kingdom. Special musical guest is Los Hermanos Gonzalez. Refreshments will be served after the session, starting around 8:30 p.m.

The following day a Hispanic leaders luncheon will explore the benefits of living daily in integrity in our personal, family, church and professional lives. The lunch panelists are Luis Lopez; Camilo Del Valle, pastor of Iglesia Bautista Getsemani in McAllen; Dr. Bruno Molina, SBTC associate in interfaith evangelism and apologetics; and Chuy Avila, lead associate for SBTC Español. The luncheon is 12:00–2:00 p.m. on Monday, Nov. 14, and registration is required. **Visit [sbtexas.com/am22](http://sbtexas.com/am22).**



# Getting creative about creation

9-year-old digitally  
illustrates cartoon to share  
Bible story with friends

**K**AMILA REYNA HAS ALWAYS BEEN AN ARTISTIC CHILD.

From singing in front of hundreds of people to sharing devotionals, the 9-year-old has never been afraid to display her God-given talents in front of others. Her parents—Jonatan Reyna, pastor of Paramount en Español in Amarillo, and his wife, Karla—have always encouraged her to use those talents in His service.

While playing with a kids' activity app called Toca Boca recently, Kamila learned she could animate characters and scenes, providing her with another avenue to do just that.



“I found a button in [the app] that I didn’t know what it was for, and when I clicked it, I realized I could record my voice and make a video,” she said. “[So I thought], maybe I should start making videos!”

Kamila sent her first video to her dad, who was surprised at what she had created. On July 15, Pastor Reyna posted the video on his Facebook page. The animated video lasts two minutes and seven seconds and recounts the biblical creation story from the book of Genesis. Kamila personally narrated the clip, and it was well-received from those who saw it on her dad’s page.



Kamila and her family said they hope God will continue to open doors for them to impact the children in their community with the gospel.

**“My desire is that kids know about Jesus and receive Him into their hearts.”**

**KAMILA REYNA**

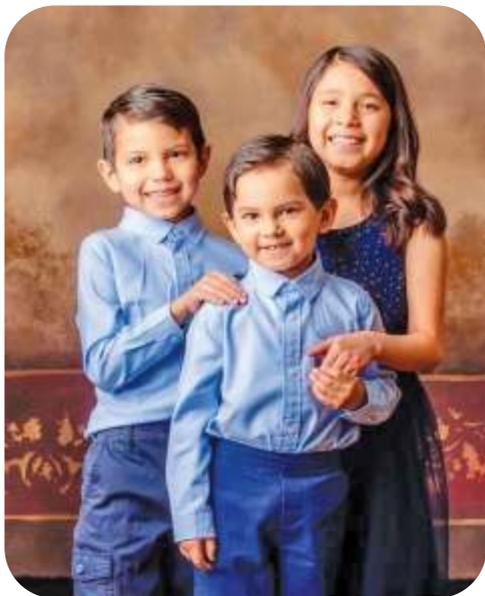
“I asked in the post if it would be a good idea to create a YouTube channel with my daughter’s cartoons,” Pastor Reyna said, “and many wrote me to hurry up and do it! ... Since she is doing these cartoons and has been doing devotionals, this is a great opportunity to combine them both to share the Word.”

Seeing an opportunity for Kamila to use the app and its abilities to minister to and motivate other children and people in their community, Pastor Reyna and his wife have encouraged Kamila to continue creating videos with biblical content. One of the potential opportunities Pastor Reyna sees in creating cartoons like this is that they can be used as a vehicle for evangelism. He said Kamila has already talked about Jesus with many of her friends at school, which is located right behind the church.

Because of his background not only as a music teacher, but in video editing and sound production, Pastor Reyna said he plans to team up with Kamila to make more animations that will continue to utilize a more modern style.

Kamila now has a YouTube channel and is creating content for children of all ages (the channel is called “Kami’s Vlog”). She and her family said they hope God will continue to open doors for them to impact the children in their community with the gospel.

“My desire is that kids know about Jesus and receive Him into their hearts,” Kamila said.



## Fall Preview Day

// OCTOBER 21, 2022

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# Creatividad en la creación

Niña de 9 años ilustra dibujo animado para compartir historias de la Biblia con sus amigos

**K**AMILA REYNA SIEMPRE HA SIDO UNA NIÑA ARTÍSTICA.

Desde cantar frente a cientos de personas hasta compartir devocionales, esta niña de 9 años nunca ha tenido miedo de mostrar los talentos que Dios le ha dado frente a los demás. Sus padres -Jonatan Reyna, pastor de Paramount en español en Amarillo, y su esposa, Karla- siempre la han animado a usar esos talentos para Su servicio.

Recientemente, mientras jugaba con una aplicación de actividades para



niños, Kamila aprendió que podía animar personajes y escenas, lo que le proporcionó otra vía para hacer precisamente eso.

“Encontré un botón en [la aplicación] Toca Boca que no sabía para qué servía y cuando lo pulsé, me di cuenta de que podía grabar mi voz y hacer un video”, dijo. “[Así que pensé], ¡quizás debería empezar a hacer videos!”

Kamila envió su primer video a su padre, quien se sorprendió de lo que su hija había creado. El 15 de julio, el pastor Reyna publicó el video en su página de Facebook. El video animado dura dos



**“Mi deseo es que los niños conozcan a Jesús y lo reciban en sus corazones”**

**KAMILA REYNA**

minutos y siete segundos y narra la historia bíblica de la creación del libro del Génesis. Kamila narró personalmente el clip y fue bien recibido por quienes lo vieron en la página de su padre.

“Pregunté en la publicación si sería buena idea crear un canal de YouTube con los dibujos animados de mi hija”, dijo el pastor Reyna, “¡y muchos me escribieron que me apresurara a hacerlo! ... Como ella está haciendo estos dibujos animados y ha estado haciendo devocionales, esta es una gran oportunidad para combinar ambos para compartir la Palabra”.

Viendo una oportunidad para que Kamila utilice la aplicación y sus habilidades para ministrar y motivar a otros niños y personas de su comunidad, el pastor Reyna y su esposa han animado a Kamila a seguir creando videos con contenido bíblico. Una de las oportunidades potenciales que el pastor Reyna ve en la creación de

dibujos animados como este es que pueden ser utilizados como un vehículo para la evangelización. Dijo que Kamila ya ha hablado de Jesús con muchos de sus amigos en la escuela, que se encuentra justo detrás de la iglesia.

Debido a su experiencia no sólo como profesor de música, sino en la edición de video y la producción de sonido, el pastor Reyna dijo que planea asociarse con Kamila para hacer más animaciones que seguirán utilizando un estilo más moderno de animación.

Kamila tiene ahora un canal de YouTube y está creando contenidos para niños de todas las edades. Ella y su familia dicen que esperan que Dios les siga abriendo puertas para impactar a los niños de su comunidad con el evangelio.

“Mi deseo es que los niños conozcan a Jesús y lo reciban en sus corazones”, dijo Kamila.



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## PASTOR, WIFE LEAD COLOMBIAN COUPLE TO CHRIST ON ISRAEL TRIP

**JERUSALEM** Traveling to Israel had always been a dream of Juan Munoz—pastor of Arlington’s Iglesia Bautista Cristo es el Camino—and his wife, Nina.

“It was a dream that my wife and I had,” Pastor Munoz said. “It finally came true.” The couple cried and prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane, among many moving experiences. But the Lord had a bigger purpose for the couple as they joined other pastors and their wives on the July trip, which was sponsored by the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention.

While on the trip, the Munozes met a couple from Colombia struggling in their marriage. After speaking with the couple in the lobby of a hotel, the Munozes shared the gospel with them and they prayed to receive Christ.

“I just praise God for the opportunity,” Pastor Munoz told the Texan. “We did enter their lives and they had a tremendous need. It was orchestrated by God.”

—JANE RODGERS



SCAN QR CODE FOR FULL ARTICLE



## SBTC DR RESPONDS AFTER MASSIVE RAINFALL, FLOODS IN TARRANT COUNTY

**ARLINGTON** Severe storms on August 21-22 pummeled Tarrant County, dropping 8.41 inches in Fort Worth and 7.72 inches in Arlington, the second-highest total amount of rainfall yet recorded in North Texas over a 24-hour period, the National Weather Service reported.



In response, 15 Southern Baptists of Texas Convention Disaster Relief volunteers traveled to the area over Labor Day weekend to assist. Included in that response were a recovery unit from First Baptist Pflugerville, a shower/laundry unit from the Bi-Stone association in Mexia, and a feeding unit from First Baptist Flint. Feeding and laundry personnel served volunteers, who stayed at International Baptist Church in Arlington. Chaplains and assessors also accompanied the teams.

Among other jobs, teams also worked on tarping the roof of the recently acquired worship center of Empowerment Life Cathedral, which suffered storm damage to its facilities. The job illustrates another goal of SBTC DR: to assist local churches in recovery so they can minister to their communities.

—JANE RODGERS

## GALVESTON CHURCH MOURNS TEEN KILLED IN CRASH NEAR HIGH SCHOOL

**GALVESTON** Coastal Community Church in Galveston held a prayer vigil on September 3 following the death of one of its students, 14-year-old Galveston Ball High School freshman Mason Nelson.

Nelson was traveling in a Jeep that was struck by a speeding SUV on Friday, Sept. 2. Three other students survived the crash, which occurred directly across the street from the high school, according to news outlets, including KHOU-11.

The 28-year-old male driver of the SUV was arrested. He had been released from prison—where he had served a sentence for his third DUI conviction—only a few hours before the crash.

—JANE RODGERS, KHOU-11





## SAGEMONT'S CARTER RETIRING, TO JOIN NAMB'S SEND NETWORK

**HOUSTON** Matt Carter, pastor of Sagemont Church in Houston, announced to his congregation Sunday, Sept. 11, that he will retire as senior pastor and join the North American Mission Board's Send Network team as vice president of mobilization.

"I am thrilled to take what I've learned through planting one church, as well as pastoring an established church in the next phase of its history, to pour into the next generation of pastors and church planters," Carter said Monday.

In his new role, Carter will focus on mobilizing churches and church-planting missionaries across North America to help Send Network engage more local churches in the process of discovering, developing and deploying more church planters throughout the United States, Canada and Puerto Rico.

Carter described how recent health issues played a role in his decision to retire as pastor. Transitioning out of the pastorate allows him to continue serving in ministry in a role that involves less stress than the day-to-day responsibilities of pastoring.

"Over the years, I've been thankful for Matt's friendship and input as an experienced church planter and pastor as NAMB shifted more of its focus to church planting," said NAMB President Kevin Ezell. "Now, Matt will be leading in this new capacity to engage Southern Baptists in the mission of reaching North America with the Gospel as he and Vance take Send Network church planting to the next level."

—BAPTIST PRESS

## SBTC CHURCH PLANT PERSEVERES AFTER EQUIPMENT TRAILER STOLEN

**WEST COLUMBIA** The first Sunday of September brought a challenge—and an opportunity to overcome adversity—for West Oaks Church, an SBTC church plant.

On Friday, August 30, church leaders realized one of the church's equipment trailers had been stolen. Inside the stolen trailer were various signs and sound equipment, a television, printers, and children's check-in stands—all valued at around \$8,000-\$9,000 dollars, according to Pastor Colby Wallace.

Despite the theft, the church stepped up—with a little help from other nearby churches and others who loaned tables, mic stands, and other equipment to help West Oaks Church get through the weekend. After hustling to replace or find other ways to perform the functions of the church that Sunday, Wallace said he was pleased to see a larger-than-expected number of attendees and visitors show up for the holiday weekend service.

"We adjusted pretty well, and our staff and our people stepped up and we made it work," Wallace said. "In spite of what happened, everything went very smooth and it was very encouraging to see the support we had."

—JAYSON LARSON

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\*Korean and Spanish available



# 'GOD IS MAKING THIS LAST PART OF MY LIFE WONDERFUL'

**A**t my church [Cross City North, Trophy Club], I'm known as "Mama Kay." When I told my pastor, Kent Wells, to call me that, he said, "Well, every church needs a Mama Kay." So, I'm Mama Kay—all the children know me. Being a greeter at my church and pouring out God's love on people is the greatest reward I could have.



But I didn't start out at Cross City's north campus. I was at the Euless campus [formerly First Baptist Church of Euless] for 27 years. I lived close enough to that location, and I didn't want to travel any further. My husband had been ill with some strokes for many years. And in that church, I had been part of the choir for eight years and worked in a newborn children's nursery for some years. I was an outreach leader and an inreach leader—I just thoroughly enjoyed being there. I had a wonderful Sunday school group. And then my husband died in 2017.

I found myself not wanting to go back to church for a while because, for one thing, it was a long drive to

make by myself. In bad weather, I wouldn't do it. I felt so bad about missing church, but it was just a fact of life that I was 80 years old, and that was just a lot for me. After my husband passed away, my granddaughter insisted I come live close to her in Trophy Club, which was a longer commute to Euless.

After I moved, Pastor John Meador saw a need in this part of the Metroplex for another church. He'd been looking for a place to plant a church, and they looked around my area. I didn't hear much talk about it because I was just going to Sunday school sometimes and not church. We had a vote on it one Sunday when I was there, and they voted to go ahead and start this campus, Cross City North. And I thought, my goodness, this is going to be in Trophy Club.

We were going to be meeting temporarily at Byron Nelson High School, three minutes from my house. I just said to myself, "Well, God, you saw that I was having a hard time getting to church, and you just sent a church out to me!" And let me tell you, I rejoiced about that. The Sunday after we passed the vote, I stopped the new campus pastor in the hall and I said, "Kent, my name is Kay Meers and I live in Trophy Club, and I'm going to be coming to the new church to see if it's where I

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**I feel like I've had a reawakening of my spiritual life, of worship, and serving God in a joyful and more meaningful way than I ever thought possible at my age.**  
 ”



need to be.” His face lit up. And he says, “Well, let me tell you, I can just see your smiling face greeting at the door of our new church.” And so, I went the very first Sunday. There was just something about it. There was an excitement there. I'd never been part of planting a new church before.

I did go up to him after the sermon, and I said, “Kent, I really have enjoyed it here, but I feel such a loyalty to my Sunday school class back in Eules. We've been together for years. We're all hitting 80 now and there's deaths and illness, and I just don't know if I can make the break.” And he says, “Well, Kay, I'll promise you one thing. If you stay over here with us, we'll keep you young and happy.” I decided to stay, and it was just so neat to get in the car and go three minutes to church. I didn't miss a Sunday, I don't think, for the first year.

But there have been some challenges. I had a little illness and had to lay out for a few Sundays. One time I had to have a

heart procedure on a Wednesday and got home from the hospital on Friday, but I was at church on Sunday. My pastor said to the rest of our church, “Kay Meers is here today. No matter what, she was knocked out cold, but she managed to get to church today.”

And then my son died of cancer in August. For about four months, he needed someone to take care of him. I was eager to get to church on Sunday, but I had to miss a few weeks. My daughter goes to another church, but we would trade out. She'd stay one Sunday morning so I could come to church, and I'd stay the next Sunday morning so she could go to church. But we were there with David the whole time, one of us, the whole family. My whole church was so kind to me during that time.

I feel like I've had a reawakening of my spiritual life, of worship, and serving God in a joyful and more meaningful way than I ever thought possible at my age. It's just been a joy to me—an absolute joy. And I'm so grateful to God for making this last part of my life so wonderful. I'm loved and respected and happy. Even through the death of my husband and the death of my son, God has given me a peace and a comfort that I didn't know was possible during grieving. He has really been wonderful to me. I know that this was His plan for me and my reward for following His path.

I'm just so happy to see everybody and so eager for them to know the happiness that I know. That's about all I can say. It's wonderful and I'm happy. And I sure do thank God. I thank my good Lord for all the blessings He's given me. I thank Him for my life.

What's my story? The closer you get to Jesus, the more you can love people!



**Want to share a story of what God is doing in your life or your church?**  
 Scan the QR code or e-mail [jlaron@sbtexas.com](mailto:jlaron@sbtexas.com) to tell us your story.



# Church Positions

For the latest listings, visit [texan.digital/church-positions](http://texan.digital/church-positions)

## PASTOR

**FBC Cameron** is seeking God's man for FT pastor. Send resume to [firstbaptistcameron@gmail.com](mailto:firstbaptistcameron@gmail.com).

**New Hope BC in League City** is seeking a FT pastor. We are a SBTC church that adheres to the Baptist Faith and Message 2000. NHBC is a loving, caring, and financially secure church looking for the man whom God is calling to lead us. Send resumes to [PSCNHBC@gmail.com](mailto:PSCNHBC@gmail.com).

**Trinity Baptist Church in Bonham** is seeking a FT pastor. He will be responsible for preaching God's Word, be the spiritual leader for the staff and congregation, and give leadership to the ministry of the church. Email resume to: [trinitybaptist1955@gmail.com](mailto:trinitybaptist1955@gmail.com).

**GracePointe Church of Springtown** is seeking a FT pastor. Send resumes and inquiries to: [SBCGracePointe@gmail.com](mailto:SBCGracePointe@gmail.com).

**Frio Canyon BC, Leakey** is seeking a FT pastor. Email resume to [fcbbpastorsearch2022@gmail.com](mailto:fcbbpastorsearch2022@gmail.com).

**Plum Ridge Missionary Baptist Church** is seeking a FT pastor. We are a very small community church with only Sunday school and Sunday morning worship services. We have an interim pastor at this time and a full-time pianist. We are mostly a retired congregation. Email resume to Dianne Judalet at [djudale@hotmail.com](mailto:djudale@hotmail.com).

**First Baptist Church, Schertz** is seeking a FT pastor to provide spiritual leadership through biblical preaching, discipleship, and exemplifying godly character as servant leader. We seek a pastor eager to meet the challenges and opportunities while providing a vision for kingdom growth. Bi-vocational considered. Send resume via email to: [fbcs\\_pastor\\_search@outlook.com](mailto:fbcs_pastor_search@outlook.com).

**Alamo Heights Baptist Church in Port Lavaca** is prayerfully seeking a FT senior pastor. A parsonage is provided. Candidates should submit a cover letter & resume to: [ahbc2018@gmail.com](mailto:ahbc2018@gmail.com) Attn: Pastor Search Committee.

**Bethany Baptist Church, Cushing** is looking for a PT/bi-vocational pastor for a small country church. Email resume to [aslrvwofsdream@yahoo.com](mailto:aslrvwofsdream@yahoo.com).

**Duffau Baptist Church in Duffau** is seeking a bi-vocational pastor. Church is located just minutes from Stephenville and Hico in a rural country setting with a three-bedroom parsonage as part of the position and part of the salary. Experience is preferred. Please send resume to [duffaubaptistchurch@gmail.com](mailto:duffaubaptistchurch@gmail.com).

**Bethel Heights Baptist Church, 3915 CR 127, Gatesville, Texas 76528**, is looking for a bi-vocational pastor to shepherd us. Resumes can be sent to the church.

**North Woods Baptist Church, Spring** is seeking a bi-vocational/PT senior pastor. We are located 25 miles north of Houston. We are a church family bound through Christ looking for a compassionate leader who stands firmly on the Word of God. Please send resume with references to: [resume@northwoods baptistchurch.org](mailto:resume@northwoods baptistchurch.org).

**Birth of Hope Baptist Church in Cottonwood Shores** is prayerfully seeking a bi-vocational pastor to lead it in reaching the unchurched of Cottonwood Shores, Horseshoe Bay, and the surrounding area. Email resume to Ed Necker at [neckers3ed@gmail.com](mailto:neckers3ed@gmail.com).

**Marcelina Baptist Church, Floresville** is looking for a bi-vocational pastor. Email resume to [marcelinabaptistchurch1875@gmail.com](mailto:marcelinabaptistchurch1875@gmail.com).

**Calvary Baptist Church in Euless** is seeking a bi-vocational pastor. We are a small SBTC Church, and adhere to the Baptist Faith & Message 2000. Send resume to [calvaryeuless@outlook.com](mailto:calvaryeuless@outlook.com). Website: <http://www.calvaryeuless.com>.

**Community Baptist Church, Wink** is seeking a bi-vocational pastor. Salary \$200 weekly services/\$200 weekly housing. Address: PO Box 996, Wink, TX 79789; Email: [cogwg9403@att.net](mailto:cogwg9403@att.net); Office 432-527-3453; Contacts: Jennafer Newcomb 432-290-5444; Bill Anderson 620-952-0359; Brig Bueno 432-208-4045; Shelley Mayberry 432-208-2216.

**Sylvester Baptist Church, McCaulley** is seeking a bi-vocational senior/lead pastor. Small SBTC church in rural area. Quiet community. Parsonage available. Reply to [dpippin38@yahoo.com](mailto:dpippin38@yahoo.com) or Sylvester Baptist Church, PO Box 8, Sylvester, TX 79560.

**Central BC, Baytown** is seeking a bilingual/ bi-vocational pastor to lead 100 year-old church with no debt to transition the church to reach the Hispanic community with the message of Christ. Mail resume to Central Baptist Church, Attn: Pastor Search Committee, 1800 King St., Baytown, TX 77520 or email [pastorsearch@sanjacintobaptist.com](mailto:pastorsearch@sanjacintobaptist.com).

## MUSIC

**FBC Fairfield** seeks FT associate pastor of worship. Send letter of interest and resumes to [worshipsearch@fbcfairfield.org](mailto:worshipsearch@fbcfairfield.org).

**Highland Terrace Baptist Church, Greenville** is seeking a FT minister of music. Email resume to [connect@highlandterrace.org](mailto:connect@highlandterrace.org).

**FBC Boerne** is seeking a FT associate youth worship minister. Email resume to Garrett McCord at [gmccord@fbcboerne.org](mailto:gmccord@fbcboerne.org).

**Coastal Oaks Church Personnel Committee, Rockport** is seeking a PT choir director. Email resume to [personnel@coastaloakschurch.org](mailto:personnel@coastaloakschurch.org).

**Nassau Bay Baptist Church, Houston** is seeking applicants for a FT minister of music. Please send resumes and a cover letter to [pastor@nbbchurch.org](mailto:pastor@nbbchurch.org).

**Birth of Hope Baptist Church, Cottonwood Shores** is in need of someone to lead the music for the Sunday morning worship service. Ability to play the piano, a keyboard, or guitar is a plus. Email resume to Ed Necker at [neckers3ed@gmail.com](mailto:neckers3ed@gmail.com).

**Calvary Baptist, Rosenberg** is seeking a PT worship pastor who is willing to incorporate Christian worship music from various styles and generational tastes. Music degree preferred. Please submit a resume and samples of you leading worship to [church@calvaryrosenberg.org](mailto:church@calvaryrosenberg.org). Check out [www.calvaryrosenberg.org](http://www.calvaryrosenberg.org) to learn more about us.

**First Baptist Church of Smithfield** is seeking a PT worship pastor. We are located at 7912 Main Street, North Richland Hills, TX 76182, 817-281-1820, [fbcsmithfield.com](mailto:fbcsmithfield.com).

**First Baptist Church of Rogers** is seeking a PT bi-vocational worship leader/music minister. Please send resume to [fbcrogers@fbcrogers.com](mailto:fbcrogers@fbcrogers.com).

**Travis Avenue BC in Fort Worth** is in search of a PT Spanish-speaking worship minister to lead worship for the Spanish service. Se busca un ministro de alabanza part-time que dirija la adoración para el servicio de español. Send resume to [jose.arzate@travis.org](mailto:jose.arzate@travis.org).

**LIFEChurch, Leona** is praying for God to send our church a PT contemporary style worship leader. LIFEChurch is located on I-45 halfway between Dallas and Houston. Please contact Mark Gray: [mark@lclifechurch.com](mailto:mark@lclifechurch.com) or 903-344-2283.

## STUDENTS

**Oates Drive Baptist Church, Mesquite** is seeking a student minister (grades 7-12) to coordinate Bible study, discipleship, outreach. Salary negotiable. Part or full-time available. Email resume to Jim Burt at [jburtodbc@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jburtodbc@sbcglobal.net).

**First Baptist Church of Madisonville** is looking for a FT student pastor. Applicants must have a desire to disciple students and love the church. FBC desires our student pastor to teach expositionally and love unconditionally and must affirm the BF&M 2000.

**FBC Sherman** is seeking a FT student minister who will lead, shepherd, and manage all aspects of student-aged programming for students from 6th-12th grade. Please email questions on full job description and resumes to our search committee at [studentministersearch@fbcsherman.org](mailto:studentministersearch@fbcsherman.org).

**Sherwood Baptist Church, Odessa**, is seeking a FT minister of youth to introduce young people to Christ, teaching them to become spiritually mature followers of Christ, and equipping them to become disciple-makers. Send resumes to: [personnel@sherwood.church](mailto:personnel@sherwood.church).

**First Baptist Mason**, a growing, revitalizing church in the Texas Hill Country, seeks a FT student pastor. Apply at [www.fbmason.org/studentpastor](http://www.fbmason.org/studentpastor).

**New Hope FBC, Cedar Park** is searching for a FT student pastor to minister to and disciple students (6th-12th grade and college) to accomplish the purpose and vision of the church. Email resume to Tina Christie @ [tinac@discovernewhope.com](mailto:tinac@discovernewhope.com).

**First Baptist Mansfield** is seeking a FT student minister with a passion for making disciples and a desire to guide students to have a multiplying impact for Christ's kingdom. For more information please contact Scott Lyle at [scott@firstmansfield.com](mailto:scott@firstmansfield.com).

**Inglewood BC in Grand Prairie** is seeking a PT student minister with a heart for discipling youth. The youth minister coordinates Sunday school and Wednesday night Bible study, oversees regular youth events, and builds relationships with youth and their families. Submit resume to [jobs@inglewoodbaptist.com](mailto:jobs@inglewoodbaptist.com).

**Fellowship of the Parks, Fort Worth** is looking for a PT high school pastor to lead our 9th-12th grade ministries. Email resume to Doug Curlee at [dougcurlee@fellowshipoftheparks.com](mailto:dougcurlee@fellowshipoftheparks.com).

**Fellowship of the Parks, Fort Worth** is looking for PT middle school pastor to lead our 7th & 8th grade ministries. Email resume to Doug Curlee at [dougcurlee@fellowshipoftheparks.com](mailto:dougcurlee@fellowshipoftheparks.com).

**Central Baptist Church in Luling** is hiring a PT/bi-vocational student ministry director to lead a discipleship-first student ministry. Applicants should visit [cbcluling.com](http://cbcluling.com) for more information.

**Piney Grove BC in Atlanta** is seeking a PT minister to students to lead and organize an effective youth ministry, including fellowship, worship, biblical teaching and discipleship. The objective of the minister to students is to make Christlike disciples of our youth.

**First Baptist Church, Wills Point** is searching for a PT minister to students. The ministry schedule is designed to work with someone pursuing educational goals. Wills Point is a small community 45 minutes east of Dallas. Please submit resumes to [search@fbwp.org](mailto:search@fbwp.org)

**Hickory Grove Baptist Church in Kilgore** is seeking a PT/bi-vocational minister to high school students. Work alongside junior high and college ministers to grow students' knowledge of and love for Jesus in rural East Texas. Contact Caleb and Alyssa Wallace, [calebandalysawallace@gmail.com](mailto:calebandalysawallace@gmail.com).

## CHILDREN

**The Church at Quail Creek Amarillo** is searching for a FT children's minister. Resumes should be submitted to [kclayton@tcqc.org](mailto:kclayton@tcqc.org).

**FBC Ponder** is seeking a PT minister to children. Job description: planning and coordinating all aspects of ministry to children (1st-6th graders), including children's church, educational and discipleship ministries, and special events. For questions or to submit a resume, email the senior pastor, Kim Broadstreet, at [kimb@fbcponder.org](mailto:kimb@fbcponder.org).

# Paid Classifieds

For the latest listings, visit [texan.digital/church-positions](http://texan.digital/church-positions)

**The Mount Church, Keller** is seeking a FT children's minister to bring strategic leadership to our next generation of kids from birth to 6th grade and to develop volunteer teams. Our big vision is to see our families form Christ-centered homes. Send resume to [jobs@themount.church](mailto:jobs@themount.church).

**FBC Sherman's Children's Ministry** is looking to hire a PT assistant to director of children's ministries! If you love Jesus and are passionate about working with infants, toddlers, and preschool-age children, please prayerfully consider joining our team! Email resume to Shannon Rosas at [srosas@fbcsherman.org](mailto:srosas@fbcsherman.org).

**Trinity BC Amarillo** is seeking a FT children's director/pastor to oversee ministry for ages birth-5th grade. Email resume to Nate Magloughlin at [nate@tbcamarillo.org](mailto:nate@tbcamarillo.org).

**First Baptist Church Graham** is seeking a FT minister to children and families. Email resume to Brian Brooks at [brianbrooks@fbcgraham.com](mailto:brianbrooks@fbcgraham.com).

**Longbranch Community Baptist Church in Midlothian** is seeking a PT children's ministry coordinator to make disciples of our children and their families. Interested candidates should contact [brent@lcbcmidlothian.org](mailto:brent@lcbcmidlothian.org) for more information. Part-time position, pays \$20,000 annually.

**Coastal Oaks Church Personnel Committee, Rockport** is seeking a PT or FT children's minister. Email resume to [personnel@coastaloakschurch.org](mailto:personnel@coastaloakschurch.org).

## COMBINATION

**FBC Waskom** is seeking a FT youth/worship pastor. The church style is a blend of contemporary worship and modern versions of hymns. Send resume to [lvshelton@fbcwaskom.org](mailto:lvshelton@fbcwaskom.org).

**Redeemer Church in Denton/Corinth** is seeking a FT pastor of worship and discipleship. The role includes weekly worship, AV management, overseeing community groups, Denton County outreach ministry, and men's ministry. Visit [redeemerdenton.com](http://redeemerdenton.com) for more information regarding position. Resumes can be emailed to lead pastor, [micah@redeemerdenton.com](mailto:micah@redeemerdenton.com).

**Boyd Baptist Church, Bonham** is searching for the man God would have serve as our FT associate pastor of worship and discipleship. Email resume to [boymbaptist@cablone.net](mailto:boymbaptist@cablone.net).

**First Baptist Church, Ponder** is seeking a FT minister to youth/associate pastor/or other ministry combination (music, small groups, missions, etc.). For questions or to submit a resume, email the senior pastor, Kim Broadstreet, at [kimb@fbcponder.org](mailto:kimb@fbcponder.org).

**First Baptist Church of Archer City** is seeking a FT youth and music pastor. Email resume to [officefbcactx@gmail.com](mailto:officefbcactx@gmail.com).

**Chapel of the Hills Baptist Church, Buchanan Dam** is seeking a FT worship and student pastor. This growing church in the Texas Hill Country is seeking a worshiper who will lead a solid group of middle school students through high school. Email resume to [steve@hillcountrychapel.com](mailto:steve@hillcountrychapel.com).

**Midway Baptist Church, Big Spring** is seeking a FT associate pastor/youth minister. Email resume to Greg Moore at [greglmoore71@outlook.com](mailto:greglmoore71@outlook.com).

**Ector Baptist Church, Ector**, is looking for a PT student/music pastor. More info is available at [www.ectorbaptist.com](http://www.ectorbaptist.com). Resumes can be emailed to [ectorbaptist@gmail.com](mailto:ectorbaptist@gmail.com).

## OTHER

**First Baptist Church Dallas** is seeking a FT associate director of women's ministry. Contact Sarah Meggers: [smeggers@vanderbloemen.com](mailto:smeggers@vanderbloemen.com).

**College Baptist Church of Big Spring** is seeking a FT pastor of family ministries. Direct report to the senior pastor. Email resume to Derek Wash at [cbcfamilypastor22@gmail.com](mailto:cbcfamilypastor22@gmail.com).

**Bethel Baptist Church** located next to Chapel Hill High School, east of Tyler, is seeking a FT associate pastor whose main focus will be ministering to students and their families. Parsonage provided. Send resumes or recommendations to [gilpbcc@icloud.com](mailto:gilpbcc@icloud.com).

**South Side Baptist Church, Abilene** (SSBC) is looking for a FT associate pastor who is passionate about teaching, overseeing, planning, and developing leaders. You will assist the lead pastor especially in areas of college, men's, and adult discipleship ministry. Please send resume to [blake@ssbaptist.org](mailto:blake@ssbaptist.org).

**Pathway Baptist Church, Odessa** is prayerfully seeking a FT associate family pastor. His primary roles will be students and their families. After prayerful consideration, please submit a resume with a cover letter and references in PDF form to [charles@pathwayodessa.org](mailto:charles@pathwayodessa.org). Be sure to include a link to any preaching/teaching videos.

**First Baptist Church Pittsburg** has a PT family ministry assistant position available, which includes Sunday and Wednesday responsibilities in the children's ministry and office hours on Tuesday and Wednesday (25.5 hours weekly). Salary range is \$20,250-\$23,868 based on experience and qualifications. For more information, please email [eezell@fbcpittsburg.org](mailto:eezell@fbcpittsburg.org).

## PASTOR

**FBC Hollis (Oklahoma)** is prayerfully seeking a FT pastor. Small town that is close to Amarillo, OKC, and Lubbock. Parsonage is provided. Please send resume to: FBC, P.O. Box 589, Hollis, OK 73550 or [fbcollis@pldi.net](mailto:fbcollis@pldi.net).

**Bear Creek Springs Baptist Church (Harrison, Ark.)** is now taking resumes for a FT pastor. Resumes may be sent to [bcscbpastorsearch@gmail.com](mailto:bcscbpastorsearch@gmail.com) or mailed to Attn: Pastor Search Committee 179 Devitos Loop Harrison, AR 72601. Our website can be found at [www.bearcreekspringsbaptist.org](http://www.bearcreekspringsbaptist.org).

**Vidalia First Baptist Church (Vidalia, La.)** is seeking a FT senior pastor. Email resume to Beau Pilgrim at [careers@firstbaptistvidalia.com](mailto:careers@firstbaptistvidalia.com).

## MUSIC

**Nassau Bay Baptist Church, Houston** is seeking applicants for a FT minister of music. Please send resumes and a cover letter to [pastor@nbbchurch.org](mailto:pastor@nbbchurch.org).

## YOUTH

**Trinity Baptist Church (Searcy, Ark.)** is seeking a FT youth pastor. Send resumes to [ypst@tbcsearcy.org](mailto:ypst@tbcsearcy.org).

## COMBINATION

**FBC Idabel (Oklahoma)** is searching for a FT music/youth minister to join our staff team in beautiful SE OK. We are committed to blended worship and creating a discipling culture in our teens. Competitive salary with parsonage. Send resume and worship leading video links to [fbcidabel@sbcglobal.net](mailto:fbcidabel@sbcglobal.net).

**First Baptist West (Lawton, Okla.)** a growing multi-cultural and multi-generational church family is accepting resumes for a FT associate pastor of worship and missions. First Baptist West averages 300 in worship on Sunday mornings. Please send resumes to [worship@firstbaptistwest.com](mailto:worship@firstbaptistwest.com).

## OTHER

**Semi-retired Baptist pastor downsizing his personal library.** Many good books available for donation or cheap prices. Write David at [dmmac@psmail.net](mailto:dmmac@psmail.net) for book list, subject line: book list.

**FBC Mansfield has 3 portable buildings for sale:** Portable Buildings 1 & 2: 64 x 25. Beige and brown trim color. Used as youth ministry area. Concrete siding outside material. Two entrance doors. Windows in unit. Insulated and with lighting. Two HVAC units. Recently remodeled. Entrance ramp and steps. \$14,500 each. Portable Building 3: 90 x 25. Same attributes as Buildings 1 & 2. With front and side entrances, 4 locations. Entrance ramp and steps for front and side locations. \$19,500. Please send direct inquiries about all 3 buildings to the Facilities Director, [Tray@firstmansfield.com](mailto:Tray@firstmansfield.com), at First Baptist Church, Mansfield. (817) 463-1161.

**Cash paid for large and small libraries.** Baker Book House has been buying and selling used Christian books since 1939. Please email us at [greg.stevens@bakerbookhouse.com](mailto:greg.stevens@bakerbookhouse.com) or call 616-957-3110.

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**First Baptist Church (Ruston, La.)** is seeking a FT women's minister. Email resume to Brenda Martin at [brenda@fbcruston.org](mailto:brenda@fbcruston.org).

**SWBTS/TBC:** If you're looking for theological education that includes both academic challenge and hands-on ministry experience, then look no further than Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and Texas Baptist College, located in Fort Worth, TX. SWBTS and TBC are dedicated to providing trustworthy Christian higher education to undergraduate and graduate students, no matter where God is calling them. And the best way to see for yourself is to attend Fall Preview Day on October 21.

Preview Days are your opportunity to see first-hand all that Southwestern Seminary and Texas Baptist College have to offer. During your visit, you'll tour the campus, speak with faculty members, chat with fellow students, hear from President Adam W. Greenway, and experience the unique campus community of Southwestern Seminary and TBC.

Fall Preview Day is October 21, so register today, for free, at [swbts.edu/preview](http://swbts.edu/preview) or [texasbaptistcollege.com/preview](http://texasbaptistcollege.com/preview).

# What your pastor wants you to know, but probably won't tell you

**B**ecause most pastors long to please the people they serve, and dare I say, the people who pay their salary, they may be reluctant to share some things with their flock that they would really want them to know. Yet these are the types of things that often help them to be a better pastor.

After having served as a pastor for 25 years prior to coming on staff with the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention, here are a few things I would want my congregation to know. These may be some things your pastor would want you to know as well, yet may be hesitant to share:



## **Not every emergency is really an emergency**

Pastors often receive phone calls during “non-office hours” from frantic parishioners who have had something happen that they deem as an emergency requiring the pastor’s counsel or attention immediately. It could be anything from a marital issue to a job situation or a family problem where they turn to their pastor—who they believe should be on call 24 hours a day.

This is not to say that there are not legitimate emergencies. However, what I have found and experienced is that if I communicate to the person or couple in need that I won’t be available until the following day, more often than not, the matter has taken care of itself. For example, if a married couple has a passionate dispute at 10 p.m. and feels they need their pastor’s counsel immediately, if the pastor will tell the couple he will be available in the morning during office hours, the matter often gets resolved. A pastor can’t heal in a one-hour counseling session what has been brewing for months or even years.

## **Please respect my time**

It may be that because the pastor is in the “people” business, his congregation sees him as being available for the people to just drop in on him at the office whenever they have some spare time. Let me say that the pastor is available to his people, but they need to respect his time—specifically his study time. Having preached almost every Sunday for 25 years—which means praying, researching, and preparing a message each of those times—the pastor’s study time needs to be the most protected and respected time. In sermon preparation, your pastor needs to be totally focused and to get into what is known as a flow—an uninterrupted time period without people dropping by or having to respond to phone calls or texts.

## **I have a family, too**

Think about this: the pastor is the only professional who requires success both at home and at work. This requires your pastor to shepherd and disciple his family first. To be successful at this requires time and energy. Many are the stories of pastors sacrificing their families for the sake of their church family. If your pastor has children living at home, more than likely they will have activities and events just like your family does. Let your pastor lead and serve his family first. Here’s what I know: when things are right at home, your pastor will be a better pastor.



*Jeff Lynn serves as the SBTC Senior Strategist for Church Health and Leadership.*

# WHAT'S UP NEXT?

2022 CALENDAR

FOR MORE ABOUT SBTC EVENTS OR TO VIEW A MORE DETAILED CALENDAR, [VISIT SBTEXAS.COM/EVENTS](https://www.sbtexas.com/events)



EXPLORING MINISTRY TOPICS:  
PRAYER VIRTUAL EVENT

OCT. 25

[sbtexas.com/exploring](https://www.sbtexas.com/exploring)



SBTC ANNUAL  
MEETING

NOV. 14-15 CORPUS CHRISTI

[sbtexas.com/am22](https://www.sbtexas.com/am22)



PASTOR/WIFE  
DATE NIGHT

DEC. 9 SAN ANTONIO

[sbtexas.com/datenight](https://www.sbtexas.com/datenight)

## OCTOBER

2	Cooperative Program Sunday
4	Pastors Masters Golf Tournament, Flower Mound
6	Young Pastors Network Regional Gathering, Houston
7	She Stands Women's Conference, Lubbock
11	Send Summit, Fielder Church-South Oaks, Arlington
25	Exploring Ministry Topics: Prayer Virtual Event
25	Exploring Ministry Topics: Wives of Senior Pastors Virtual Event

## NOVEMBER

1	Young Pastors Network Regional Gathering, Odessa
13	SBTC Annual Meeting Spanish Session, Corpus Christi
14	Interim Pastor Equipping, Corpus Christi
14-15	SBTC Annual Meeting, Corpus Christi

## DECEMBER

1	Student Ministers Getaway, Austin
4	Lottie Moon Week of Prayer
9	Pastor/Wife Date Night, San Antonio



FOR MORE SBTC EVENTS  
SCAN THIS QR CODE WITH  
YOUR PHONE'S CAMERA



JOIN US FOR A SPECIAL TIME OF PRAYER MONDAY NIGHT W/TODD KAUNITZ

ANNUAL  MEETING

PURSUING  
*Presence*

Jeremiah 29:12-14

**NOVEMBER 14-15**

CORPUS CHRISTI  
AMERICAN BANK CENTER

**Register Today**

To see a schedule and make  
your hotel reservations visit:

[sbtexas.com/am22](http://sbtexas.com/am22)



SPEAKERS WILL INCLUDE:



Bart Barber



Matt Boswell



Bill Elliff



Todd Kaunitz



Nathan Lino



Chip Luter



Jason Paredes



Bryant Wright