

Reach
Texas
OFFERING

ADVANCING *THE MISSION* TOGETHER



YOUR SBTC STATE MISSIONS OFFERING



WHAT IS THE REACH TEXAS OFFERING?

» The annual state missions offering of the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention.

» A way for you and your church to participate in a Great Commission strategy for Texas.

» A way to start more churches and reach more people for Christ.

» A way to help change lives.

Reach
Texas
OFFERING

\$2
MILLION



STATEWIDE
CHALLENGE
GOAL

100
PERCENT

of your Reach
Texas giving is
used for missions
and evangelism



HOW TO USE THIS BOOKLET

Reach
Texas
OFFERING

2024-2025

PRAY

As you read through these stories daily, pray that God would continue to use the SBTC ministries highlighted to mobilize churches.

SHARE

Tell at least one other person how God may have spoken to your heart through that day's reading.

GIVE

Advance the mission by giving to the Reach Texas Offering and the Cooperative Program.

One of my good friends has a large family. He often talks about when his kids were younger and they all had multiple work responsibilities around the house. Each family member contributed his or her part to accomplish a larger task. Whenever my friend tells these stories, he always has a big smile on his face. He is so proud his family worked together to make their home better.

I get a huge smile on my face when I think about the generous giving to our Reach Texas State Missions Offering. Because you give, churches are planted, revitalized, and sent on mission locally and globally. Your giving extends the reach of student and collegiate ministries across the state and allows disaster relief volunteers to extend a helping hand—and the gospel—to people in crisis. When you give, you help train more people to reach Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, and others in one of the most culturally diverse states in the nation. ***Because you give, the mission moves forward.***

That's why our theme for this year's Reach Texas offering is ***Advancing the Mission Together.*** Paul said, "But just as you excel in everything, in faith, speaking, knowledge, and in all earnestness and in the love we inspired in you, see that you also excel in this gracious work" (2 Corinthians 8:7). Let's excel together in this gracious work. This year's offering goal is \$2 million, and as always, 100% of your giving directly supports missions and evangelism strategies right here in Texas.

Twenty-five years ago, the population in Texas was over 19 million. Today, there are over 30 million people in the state. Texas is growing and so is lostness. The task of reaching these people is large, but Jesus is calling us to work together and do all we can to shine the light of the gospel on as many as possible. Let's continue to advance that mission together.

Tony Mathews

Senior Strategist, Missional Ministries

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'They know who we are and why we were there'

Gilbert Chavez

Fairview Baptist Church

Gilbert Chavez, pastor of Fairview Baptist Church in Austin, was delighted when a church member expressed a strong desire to reach women for Jesus in her apartment community. That led to ladies from Fairview knocking on doors one Sunday afternoon last fall, striking up conversations in the complex. As a result, several women accepted an invitation to attend a Sunday afternoon Bible study in the church member's apartment.

"Even though she had already begun the work, we wanted to get some training for her and the rest of our church in evangelism," Chavez said. The pastor turned to the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention's People Groups department, which provided cross-cultural evangelism training and taught church members to use the 3 Circles method to win others to Christ.

"We were encouraged to go out as a church and teams. The training helped us understand the different pockets of people we would meet," Chavez said. "We learned to be aware and not be afraid."

The Fairview women continued to invite ladies to the Bible study and the group grew. Several women attended Bible study and two made professions of faith. One now attends Fairview regularly. A men's Bible study also began at the apartment complex. Two of the men came to Fairview and one rededicated his life to Jesus, Chavez said. Eventually, that apartment Bible study transitioned to the church, although Fairview still conducts some activities in the apartments.

The church's focus shifted in late fall 2023 to a nearby mobile home park, where Fairview members began knocking on doors and sharing the gospel. Several people came to faith in Christ, including a mother and her teenage son.

"Last Christmas, we followed up with Christmas caroling and treat bags for the kids," Chavez said. "Large groups of families from the mobile home park joined us and sang with us. ... We served hot chocolate and cookies. They know who we are and why we were there. This is the beginning of our reaching out to our community."



Faithful giving, far-reaching impact

Scottie Stice
SBTC Disaster Relief

DAY
2

It's a familiar progression with which Southeast Texans are all too familiar. But because of Reach Texas giving, they are familiar with another accompanying sight: volunteers in yellow Southern Baptists of Texas Convention Disaster Relief shirts showing up in droves and ministering to the hurting.

Heavy storms led to another deluge in early April, leading officials across the region—including in Jasper, Newton, and Hardin counties—to enact disaster declarations. The city of Kirbyville was among those hard hit. Three churches there sustained flooding, including Central Baptist Church.

The call for help went out and SBTC Disaster Relief responded. A shower unit was sent to support Texas Task Force 1 in Kirbyville, then a second shower unit was sent there while a Quick Response Unit (QRU) was deployed to Port Arthur. QRUs are mobile kitchens that can quickly mobilize to feed hundreds of meals in a short time. A second QRU was later stationed at First Baptist Church in Kirbyville.

Such call-outs can also include requests for SBTC DR volunteers to assist in the exhausting task of mudding-out flooded homes and buildings and the mobilization of chaplains to pray and share the gospel with people who are hurting, vulnerable and, in many cases, more receptive to the saving message of Christ than they have ever been.

When it comes to disaster relief, the practical impact of giving through the Reach Texas offering can't be underestimated.

"The faithful giving of SBTC churches to Reach Texas is what funds our disaster relief ministry," Stice said. "It is what pays for food that is prepared and served on the quick response feeding units. It covers the expenses of transporting and setting up shower units that support shelters, first responders, and disaster relief volunteers. Reach Texas helps with tools, safety equipment, and fuel for the cleanup teams that mud out flooded homes."

Quiet—but powerful— moments at M3 Camp

David Baysinger
First Baptist Corinth

Student pastor David Baysinger has been bringing students from First Baptist Corinth to M3 Camp in Glorieta, N.M., every summer since 2015. At M3, lives can be changed in all kinds of circumstances.

Many students feel the pull to a relationship with Christ during the camp's main worship times through songs and the preaching of God's Word. But Baysinger has also seen students trust Christ in what seemed—at least in the moment—to be the quiet, ordinary times.

Take Jayden, who, with his family, had long been involved at First Baptist Corinth. He gave his life to Jesus in the quietness of his dorm at camp one summer and was baptized at the church last fall.

And there's Braylon, a sophomore whose parents have also served at M3 Camp. Two summers ago, as the Corinth youth group prepared to load the bus at camp's end, Baysinger noticed Braylon and an older student

praying together in the parking lot as Braylon asked Jesus to be his Savior.

One summer, Baysinger urged students, including Izzy, during church group time not to wait for the next invitation in a worship service to place their trust in Jesus if they felt “that tug from the Lord.”

A short time later, just as he sat down at lunch, Baysinger felt a tap on his shoulder. Izzy wanted to trust Jesus. Baysinger, Izzy, and a female leader found a quiet place in the kitchen, and Izzy prayed to receive Christ.

Baysinger praised the “clear gospel invitations” given by M3 speakers but also commended the camp structure, where church group time is a priority.

“A number of our students have come to know Christ,” Baysinger said. “M3 has been part of that thread.”



Working together to reach a growing Asian population

Michael Wang
New Life Gospel Church

DAY
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New Life Gospel Church sees the possibilities, but the struggles are real.

The church, founded 17 years ago by its senior pastor, Thomas Wang, focuses on preaching the gospel to Asian people flowing into Texas in massive numbers, including those from China and Taiwan. When they arrive, Wang says they know little about the gospel because they were indoctrinated with atheism by the Chinese government.

One of the church's tried and true methods of sharing the gospel with Asian people when they come to the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex is connecting with them as friends through personal relationships. In this sense, the biblical words of Jesus have been a daunting reality—the harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few.

One area the church has found to enlist workers is Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Through its Chinese student fellowship, New Life learned about the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention's FIRE Initiative. The initiative—which stands for Forging Integrated

Relationships in Evangelism—connects the SBTC's academic partners such as SWBTS with its affiliated churches to increase gospel collaboration.

Through the initiative, a SWBTS student began serving as a FIRE intern in September 2023. The student serves the church in a number of ways, helping with evangelistic efforts and giving New Life another voice that can effectively communicate with a younger generation that can feel difficult to reach.

"As a Christian of her age, she can help us approach more people who are similar to her age—especially young adults," said Michael Wang, who serves New Life as an associate pastor. "Hopefully she can help them know who Jesus Christ is." He noted that God is, indeed, using the collaboration for kingdom purposes, as the church baptized three people who made professions of faith earlier this year.

"We believe God's promise," he added. "God is using this partnership to help us learn more about the SBTC. We work together and leave the results in God's hands."

Empowered to share the gospel with the next generation

Chawn Cummings

North Garland Baptist Fellowship

As Chawn Cummings pours his life into the next generation as youth director at North Garland Baptist Fellowship and at the school where he teaches and coaches, he loves to tell the stories of what God is doing through his students.

He loves to talk about a teen in his youth group who has answered the call to serve with a missions organization and recently returned from an outreach in South Africa. Now she's praying about going back to serve a two-year commitment there.

Another student was recognized for his boldness on Bring Your Bible to School Day—so much so that someone from the school emailed the student's mother to tell her how encouraged he was watching the young man read his Bible during lunch.

There's a culture Cummings wants to create among everyone with whom God has given him influence, and he credits the Empower Conference with fueling that fire.

Cummings attended Empower—an evangelistic conference

hosted annually by the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention and funded through state missions giving—and came away equipped and inspired. He heard Shane Pruitt, next gen director for the North American Mission Board, talk about calling out the called—which, in turn, inspired Cummings to work hard to develop young Christian leaders. Cummings said he was particularly challenged by Nik Ripken, a longtime missionary and author of *The Insanity of God* who frequently speaks about the persecuted church.

"I was personally challenged to be more intentional about my own personal evangelism and about inspiring the youth of my church to evangelize and become more missions minded," Cummings said.

Other sessions motivated the youth director to be more intentional about encouraging his colleagues at school to be more evangelistic—"to be a light within the law."

"We have encouraged these youth and others as we have by equipped by the Empower Conference," Cummings said, "and we are so grateful for the experience."

Church planting and church partnership at its best

Willer Montesinos

La Carpa del Valle of McAllen

DAY

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La Carpa del Valle of McAllen celebrated its first birthday in March 2024. The Rio Grande Valley church plant now has 60-70 in attendance each Sunday and is seeing multiple baptisms.

“We are seeing God’s blessings,” planter/pastor Willer Montesinos said. “God is moving us to train and equip our people to share the gospel with their families and friends. More and more people are coming to Jesus through our members.”

While the church often met in hotel rooms in its earliest days, La Carpa del Valle now gathers in a building belonging to First McAllen, which also supports the church plant. First McAllen Lead Pastor Steven Gaither said his church had been praying for vacant space on its campus to be used.

“We were thrilled to see people in that building again,” Gaither said, adding that La Carpa quickly expanded from using 3,500 to 7,000 square feet of space.

As La Carpa grew numerically and completed Send Network SBCT’s assessment process, First McAllen became La Carpa’s

official sending church. Church planting is one of the many ministry efforts funded through Reach Texas giving.

“Our church joyfully embraced this opportunity,” Gaither said. “A relationship that started because a church plant needed some space to meet has become friendship, a ministry partnership, and a wonderful kingdom-heart connection.”

The vision of La Carpa del Valle extends across the border as well. In early 2024, the church started a home church in Reynosa, Mexico, on Wednesday evenings “to reach our neighbors there,” Montesinos said.

La Carpa del Valle, translated in English, means “the tent in the valley.” The church name is derived from Exodus 33, the account of Moses pitching the “tent of meeting” outside the Israelite camp. Here, “the Lord used to speak to Moses face to face, just as a man speaks to his friend” (Exodus 33:11).

“We want to be a place where people in the Valley can receive encouragement from God face to face,” Montesinos said.

Inspired, equipped & ready to reach

Nick Apperson

First Baptist Church of Malakoff

First Baptist Church of Malakoff Student Minister Nick Apperson knew he wanted to reach out to student-athletes at the community college in a neighboring East Texas town. He just wasn't sure how to start. *Until he attended Roundup.*

Roundup, an annual event hosted by the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention and funded through Reach Texas giving, aims to encourage, equip, and network collegiate leaders across the state. Apperson attended Roundup for the first time in 2023.

Through information provided during several breakout sessions and with the encouragement of other collegiate leaders, Apperson said he gained the confidence to jump headfirst into making the campus ministry God had planted in his heart a reality.

"Being able to connect with other people doing college ministry, being able to ask questions and to hear from guys in the trenches, was incredibly eye-opening for me," Apperson said. "Roundup allowed me to connect with people who are in my corner and willing to help me reach

college students with the gospel and help them grow as disciples of Jesus Christ."

Motivated by his Roundup experience, Apperson and his wife began to regularly set up a table at the community college and offer giveaways to connect with students. They also had a pickleball night and, before long, invited some of the student-athletes they connected with into their home for a Bible study.

Each week, students from a variety of backgrounds from around the country are having conversations about the Bible and who Jesus is—some for the first time in their lives. Not only that, but the gospel is proclaimed weekly, followed by an invitation for the student-athletes to trust Jesus.

"I can see the Lord working and stirring in the lives of these young men, and I am simply trusting Him with the outcome," Apperson said. "I rejoice that these guys can come into our home, connect with me and my family, and hopefully leave with a better understanding of who Jesus really is and who they are called to be."



For SBTC DR, crisis opens doors to gospel opportunities

Scottie Stice
SBTC Disaster Relief



Sometimes people need a hand after disaster strikes, as occurred in early 2023 when winter storms wrought havoc in Austin, prompting Southern Baptists of Texas Convention Disaster Relief volunteers to deploy in early February.

Multiple SBTC DR chainsaw teams rotated in and out, completing nearly 70 jobs in Pflugerville, Hutto, Round Rock, and Northwest Austin, according to Scottie Stice, SBTC DR director.

But that wasn't the whole story.

Among the survivors assisted by SBTC DR was Larry, an elderly military veteran whose refrigerator broke during the storm.

"We removed tree damage from his home," SBTC DR volunteer Mike Jansen said. Food shared by DR volunteers was the man's first meal in two days.

Finding Larry was a divine appointment, said Debby Nichols, SBTC DR chaplain from DeKalb, Texas. Nichols and fellow chaplain/assessor Linda Mitter of Rockwall had completed

their daily assignments and were driving around Round Rock neighborhoods to see if they had missed anything.

An enormous tree, split in half, caught their attention and they drove down the adjacent cul de sac.

"That tree was God's sign to us," Nichols said. "We found Larry's house, with branches above his front door."

The ladies knocked, explained who they were, and asked if Larry needed help.

"I am not worthy," he replied. Nichols and Mitter visited with him and learned he had quit a college teaching job to care for his wife, who later died of cancer.

"He had been stuck," Nichols said of Larry's despair. The Vietnam veteran was entitled to some assistance, they realized. SBTC DR volunteer Ted Boswell, a retired pastor who teaches adult Sunday school at First Baptist Pflugerville, connected Larry with a VA advocate in his class.

But best of all, Larry accepted Christ as his savior after the chaplain told him about Jesus.



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Contact **Dan Acharya** dacharya@sbtexas.com

[**sbtexas.com/peoplegroups**](https://sbtexas.com/peoplegroups)

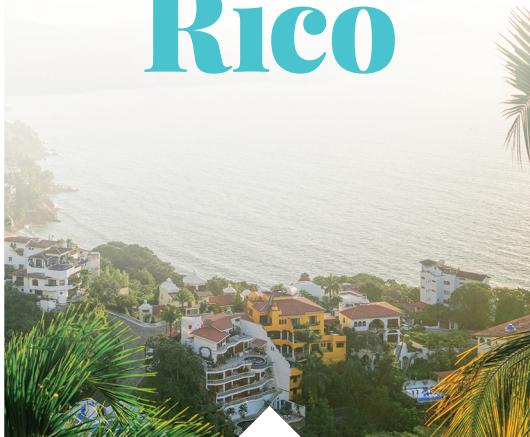


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