

The following was written by Stephen V. Allen after his summer working with us as the Church Planting intern:

Keep Austin [Missions] Weird

“Weird.” That is the single word most affiliated with the city of Austin. To those in the religious sector, however, the capital of Texas can be summed up in two words: Mission Field. The eclectic make-up of the “live music capital of the world” makes finding a single model of church difficult. It is the weird nature of Austin that makes the city a hot-spot for evangelization, a graveyard for pastors, and an innovative location for the rising emergent church movement.

But what is the emergent church movement? The ECM, as church leaders call it, cannot be easily defined by a single definition due to the wide variety of church models. The Leadership Network, based out of Dallas, Texas, has been encouraging innovative approaches to evangelism since the mid 1980’s and supports the Emergent Village. The Emergent Village is one of the largest ECM networks and defines itself as “a growing, generative friendship among missional Christians seeking to love our world in the Spirit of Jesus Christ.”

The ECM is a response to the post-modern age we live in. It is an alternative to traditional brick-and-mortar churches in that rather than bringing people into the buildings, the ECM equips people to go out and cross cultural lines.

Research from the Barna Group, an independent research company based out of Ventura, California, “shows that more than fifty million adults now practice their faith through a variety of divergent faith models.” These models include variations of “home-churches” that do not regularly meet for programmed worship settings. Its basis is reaching out and making the gospel of Jesus Christ more applicable to everyday life.

These models are popping up all over the United States including central Texas, but not everyone is excited about the new movement. The denominational-affiliated churches in Austin have seen a steady decline in membership in recent years. Many are concerned about its impact on church attendance and finances. Other church leaders question the shaky theology that some “church-homes” are experiencing in straying away from traditional models. Some people even fear its future elimination of traditional churches all together.

The Austin Baptist Association (ABA), a network of 150 churches in central Texas, does not see the emergent movement as a threat. David Smith, the Executive Director of Missions for the ABA, says “the future is fantastic... the ECM will strengthen existing churches.”

Many of the churches in Austin are already opening their doors to the movement. The First Baptist Church of Austin is allowing the Mosaic church to meet in its extra building space. Marshall Ford Baptist Church is providing couples with “Authentic Faith Community Training” preparing them for their own home-churches. Ken Goad, the Assistant Director of Missions for the ABA claims that “this model could easily be utilized by churches in transition to reach into areas around the church building.”

Reaching out into the community, that is what the ECM is all about. Church leaders like Smith and Goad believe in the mission field of Austin. The Baptist association will continue to work hard to see people reached for Christ. “That is my heart,” Smith said, “Being a networker at heart I’m going to try to find ways and points of connection for the ECM. If a huge transformation was to take place in the Austin area, it could be a catalyst for something big.”

Mission Churches & Church Plants

The Baptist Church of Driftwood
Terry Colley, Pastor

Cowboy Church of Travis County
Barry Chinn, Pastor

Cowboy Church of the Hill Country
Jeff VanRyswyk, Pastor

First Filipino Christian Fellowship
Noel Vinzon, Pastor

Grace Fellowship Community Church
Harold Hendricks, Pastor

Great Commission Christian Center
Michael White, Pastor

Greater Parkway Baptist Church
John Ford, Pastor

Iglesia Bautista River Road
Jose Chavez, Pastor

Neighborhood Baptist Church
Lee Yarbrough, Pastor

New Life Baptist Church
Marc Hegedus, Pastor

North Austin Korean Baptist Church
Lak Kyan Back, Pastor

Northwest Chinese Church
Cheng-Chi “Fish” Yu, Pastor

Primera Iglesia Bautista Manor
Hector Bahr, Pastor

Primera Iglesia Bautista Pflugerville
Jose Vasquez, Pastor

Primera Iglesia Bautista Dripping Springs
Luciano Castillo, Pastor

Seongwha Central Church
(at Friendship Baptist Church)

Shooter’s Fellowship
Joe Schram, Pastor

South Austin Community Church
Arthur Sneed, Pastor

Vietnamese Unity Baptist Church
Minh Van Lam, Pastor

The Well
Jason Jones, Pastor

Purpose Statement

The Austin Baptist Association is an alliance of participating congregations fulfilling the Great Commission

Vision Statement

The Austin Baptist Association serves as a catalyst alongside Great Commission churches to reach all people groups with the Gospel transforming our community and world through the power of God.

CHURCH NEWS

The Baptist Church of Driftwood

Has a working Hammond organ for sale; has all keys and is in good condition. Contact Gene Wood at 858-4984

New Life Baptist Church

Is looking for a Pastor of Worship to lead and build worship ministry. This is a bi-vocational, part-time position for a blended worship style church that may become full-time. Also looking for a Youth Pastor to develop and lead our student ministries; part-time with potential to become full-time. Call 251-0011 or 803-7158 or email marc.newlifebaptist_1@juno.com for information.

Park Hills Baptist Church

Is seeking a church Secretary. Must have proficiency in MS Word, Excel and Publisher. Need ability to multi-task. 30-40 hrs per week. Fax resume to 327-9482 or email phbcjobs@gmail.com.



ABA Events

Mark your calendars!

December:

5th - Pastors and their spouses are invited to a Christmas Luncheon at Northwest Baptist Church. Please RSVP to 454-2558 or aba@austinbaptist.org.

January:

16th - Monthly meeting at 11:30 AM; reservations required for lunch. Featuring presentations by the [LifeLine Screening](#), [Peggy Gerke](#), and [Gerald Daugherty](#).

WMU News

Is your church or mission team/committee planning a **mission trip** during the Christmas or Spring break? There may be other mission-minded people who would like to know about your trip, support you or even go with you. Let us know about it and we can share the information on the ABA web site. Send your info to ginialk@aol.com or to aba@austinbaptist.org.

Would you like to be a foreign missionary here in Austin? The world has come to Austin's doorstep in **Friendship International**. Sponsored by Austin Baptist Churches, Friendship meets each Thursday morning from September to May at Hyde Park and there is a place for you to share God's love and make friends with women from around the world. If you are interested in this mission field that is white and ready for harvest, contact Virginia Kreimeyer at 256-3510 or ginialk@aol.com or Carol Brooks at 928-4869 or Jesus-Wonderfulname@austin.rr.com.

Mark your calendar for the **National WMU Annual meeting** in San Antonio on **Jun. 10-12, 2007**. The ABA WMU will be assisting with the planning for this meeting. If you want to help, contact Virginia Kreimeyer at ginialk@aol.com.

Color Outside the Box is the theme for the annual Women's Conference at Highland Lakes **Feb. 23-24, 2007**. You will want to hear our worship speaker, Jeane Law, and the worship praise leader, Teresa Harmening as well as the many seminars and workshops. To register complete a registration form with a check for \$60 (includes 3 meals and lodging) payable to HLCCC, and mail to: Women's Conference, Highland Lakes Camp and Conference Center, 5902 Pace Bend Rd, N., Spicewood, TX 78699 or go to www.highlandlakescamp.org to download registration forms.

TAX SEMINAR

The ABA will once again be offering a tax seminar for ministers and church staff. Mark your calendars for **February 20, 2007**. There will be more specifics available closer to that date.

MANIA MARATHON 2006

the all night teenage New Year's celebration!

We're filling up!

Space is limited for this year's Mania Marathon. **This year's event is Sunday night, December 31 through Monday morning, January 1**. For more information, contact Bryan Hall (442-7858 Ext. 22; bryan@woodlawnbc.org) Send your check and the *approximate number* of teens and adults attending Mania Marathon to: **Mania Marathon**; Woodlawn Baptist Church; 4600 Manchaca Road; Austin, TX 78745

National Child Identification Program



The AFCA/FBI National Child ID Program (www.childidprogram.com) organization is a partnership between the American Football Coaches Association, which is the association for collegiate and professional football coaches headed by Grant Teaff, former Baylor University coach, and the FBI. The ID program works to further child safety by providing at-home identification kits which parents use to record their child's fingerprints, DNA and distinguishable characteristics. In the case of an emergency, the information can be used by authorities to help locate missing children. Many of our ABA churches already hand out these kits as a ministry in their communities and also to aid in church visitation.

The Coaches Association and the Child ID Program have asked Metro/Mega Associations to partner with them in distributing information about the ID program by getting the word out to our churches and placing informational inserts in church bulletins. In turn for our efforts, for every church member that purchases a kit for their child, the ID Program will donate a free kit to that church to be used at the Association's discretion. In the past, the Austin area churches have used the free kits to help reach people in their community. Even if someone is not comfortable being approached by a church, they are concerned with the safety of their children.

You should be receiving more information on this program soon—keep an eye out for it! It is a great way to connect to the community—the more kits members buy, the more kits the ABA will have as a tool to reach those in the Austin community. I encourage each of you to think of your children, grandchildren, and others when ordering kits, even if they don't live in Austin. I am excited about the opportunities this program and effort can bring to our churches!

Pastorless Churches

Eternal Faith Baptist
Faith Baptist, Bastrop
Fitzhugh Baptist
Highland Park Baptist
Kinney Avenue Baptist
Manchaca Baptist
Milwood Baptist
Onion Creek Baptist
Park Hills Baptist
Pleasant Hill Baptist
Ridgeway Baptist, Paige
River Road Baptist
Texas Oaks Baptist
Travis Oaks Baptist
Woodlawn Baptist

First Baptist, Manor, has called Wiley McManus to be their pastor.
Ridgetop Baptist has called Mark Gardner to serve as pastor.





You are invited to join with Christians across the greater Austin area for the Spring 2007 **Perspectives on the World Christian Movement (Perspectives)** course. Beginning **January 8 & 9, 2007**, Perspectives will be offered Monday nights and Tuesday nights over fifteen weeks.....at two different host locations.....**Hope in the City** church (south Austin) and **Great Hills Baptist Church** (north Austin). PerspectivesAustin 2007 represents an extraordinary collaboration of evangelical churches and Christian organizations. Here in Austin, in the Spring of 2006, 375+ students across 50+ churches and 10 evangelical denominations came together for Perspectives! This included Pastors, Pastoral staff's, Deacons, Elders, ministry leaders, business leaders, housewives, college students, etc. PerspectivesAustin is shaping up to be even larger and more impactful in 2007!

For those of you unfamiliar.....Perspectives is a dynamic, life changing experience where students have an opportunity to discover what God is doing around the world and consider their part in His purposes. Perspectives provides a unique opportunity to understand God's intentions and actions in the world, in a dynamic and internationally acclaimed 15 week study program. Whether you are a high school senior, college student, business person, church leader, or seminary-trained pastor.....Perspectives is for you!

Perspectives is way more than a "course", it is an encounter, an experience, an adventure with God through the eyes and experiences of Biblical historians, church planters, seminary professors and leading missiologists from around the world! It will truly live up to its name by significantly impacting your "perspective" on God and His purposes. Perspectives is divided into 4 primary modules....**Biblical** (God's unchanging purpose for the nations and His revealed Glory), **Historical** (the expansion and pioneers of Christianity and the church through history), **Cultural** (cultural challenges to spreading the Gospel and world evangelism) and **Strategic** (finishing the Biblical mandate of the Great Commission and the involvement of all the peoples of the world). Perspectives is offered throughout the year at locations around the world. Over 90,000 people have taken this course in North America alone, with over 12,000 alumni in New Zealand, Australia, the Philippines and other countries. Over 6,000 students at 150+ locations participate in Perspectives training each year!

Visit us at www.PerspectivesAustin.org for complete details and to register online. Online registration is now open for Spring 2007. The first two classes are FREE with no obligation!