

Reach
Texas
OFFERING

PRAY
GIVE
GO



YOUR SBTC STATE MISSIONS OFFERING

WHAT IS THE **REACH TEXAS OFFERING?**

➤ The annual state missions ministry 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

\$ 1.6
MILLION **Statewide
Challenge
Goal**

% 100
PERCENT **of your Reach
Texas giving is
spent on missions
and evangelism**

Because of Cooperative Program giving, all funds given through Reach Texas will go to missions and ministry with no administrative costs.



**Reach
Texas**
OFFERING

2023-2024

HOW TO USE THIS BOOKLET

AS A DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

for the Reach Texas Week of Prayer or another time of missions emphasis at your church

AS A BIBLE STUDY

for your missions group

AS A RESOURCE

to emphasize the Reach Texas offering in worship services and small groups

AS A REMINDER

throughout the year to pray for the Great Commission work in Texas

It seemed as if the world stopped when Buffalo Bills safety Damar Hamlin suffered a heart attack and collapsed on the field after making a tackle during a nationally televised NFL game in January. Shock and disbelief consumed all who were watching as paramedics performed CPR in an attempt to save his life. In the midst of this emergency, people stopped what they were doing, came together, and prayed for Hamlin's full recovery. Thank the Lord, he survived and is doing much better.

As encouraging as his recovery was, another amazing thing began to happen. Prior to his on-field incident, Hamlin started a toy drive fundraiser with a goal of raising \$2,500. In the hours following the game, his network of friends and everyday people felt compelled to give—and they gave generously. In just 10 days, donations to the toy drive exceeded \$8 million.

For our network of Southern Baptists of Texas Convention churches, a wonderful history of praying and giving exists with an added element: we not only pray and give, but we

go. As this year's Reach Texas state missions offering approaches, I want to personally thank each of you for your generous giving. Last year, we raised \$1.5 million to help us fulfill the Great Commission in Texas.

This is a blessing because, like Hamlin's story of physical collapse, people are spiritually collapsing every day and dying without Christ, finding themselves lost for eternity. Our network of churches recognizes this and gives generously so we can let people know Jesus is the answer. Giving through Reach Texas is one way our churches can participate in reaching the lost, as 100% of this offering is spent on evangelism, disaster relief, church planting, and many more missional ministries.

I thank God for you, our SBTC churches, as we pray fervently and give generously to fuel a mission the Lord has entrusted to us. Thanks in advance for continuing to give as we reach Texas together for Christ.

Tony Mathews

Senior Strategist, SBTC

A family of church planting churches **EVERYWHERE FOR EVERYONE**

If your church is looking to plant churches or if you want to explore becoming a church planter, contact us for more info. We can help you fulfill the mission to which God has called you.

THREE WAYS to start the process

- 1 Call and talk to a member of the church planting team at 817.552.2500
- 2 Email us at churchplanting@sbtexas.com
- 3 Visit sendnetworksbtc.com and fill out a pre-application

A GREAT STATE, A GREATER NEED



Texas is a state of 30 million people. Of those, 20 million are lost and without Christ. Half of those, 10 million, are Hispanic—a population that has grown exponentially in the Lone Star State over the past few decades. With the population expected to continue to swell, the need to plant more churches is all-the-more critical.

In 2021, Send Network SBTC was formed as a church planting partnership between the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention and the North American Mission Board. The partnership has strengthened church planting efforts in Texas through a process of assessing, training, caring for, and coaching planters. The collaboration has helped extend the years of support a planter can receive, as well as provide his family with one full year of free health insurance—a common barrier for planters with families. Planters are also receiving an initial deposit into a retirement account through Guidestone.

Since the partnership was formed, Send Network SBTC has deployed more church planting catalysts into the field across Texas, opened new assessment retreat

centers in locations including Dallas and Houston, and started church planting residencies across the state. As a result, the numbers of planters assessed and churches planted are encouragingly on the rise.

All of this was made possible through Reach Texas giving.

“We love Texas,” said Julio Arriola, director of Send Network SBTC, “but as great as Texas is, it also has a great need for Jesus. Planting churches is still the most effective way to reach people with the life-giving message of Jesus—the gospel.”

SCRIPTURE STUDY

 Read Matthew 9:35-38.

What was Jesus talking about in the preceding verses that led to Him speaking about the harvest and the laborers? What do you think the connection is between Jesus speaking about human suffering and then speaking about the need to send laborers into the harvest? How might Jesus be calling you to be a laborer to the “harassed and helpless” around you in your life?



DAY 2

PLANTING WITH THE LORD'S LEADING

Over Ochoa Iglesia Vida Victoriosa, Tioga

While living in his home country of Colombia, Over Ochoa sensed a call from God to plant a Hispanic church in America. He assumed it would take years of working through the complicated process of being granted residency in the U.S.

Instead of many years, it took one.

After planting Iglesia Vida Victoriosa in the small North Texas town of Tioga—an effort supported through Reach Texas giving—he and his wife, Cristina, planned to knock on hundreds of doors to tell people about Jesus and invite them to church. Their plans were frustrated when COVID shut most of those doors.

Once again, God had a different plan.

While eating at a restaurant in a nearby town, the Ochoas met Juanita Lopez, a waitress. They began sharing the gospel with her and, over time, she made the decision to trust Jesus as her Lord and Savior. Juanita not only began attending Iglesia Vida Victoriosa, but telling her co-workers about Jesus. Many of them came to faith and joined her at the church.

“Sometimes we get too focused with preaching to crowds,” Ochoa said, “but with one person coming to Christ, we can see multitudes [saved] because that one person can bring many more.”

Today, around 45 people attend the Iglesia Vida Victoriosa. Meanwhile, the Ochoas have not only continued to lead the church, but assist the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention with preparing other planters to go into the field so they, too, can watch God do exceedingly and abundantly more than anybody could ever ask or think.

POINT TO PONDER Can you recall a time in your life when God's plan was different than yours? How might sharing that testimony help other believers?

PRAYER FOCUS Church planters and their families sacrifice much, and it often takes years for firm roots to be established in the communities where God has led them. Pray for perseverance for these faithful servants of the Lord as they take the gospel into new areas.

LIVE, LEARN & LAUNCH



Much has been written and gloomy statistics abound regarding the spiritual disconnect that often happens when students graduate high school and move on to the next season of their lives.

SBTC Collegiate sees the potential for something greater—an opportunity to not only bridge that gap to keep young people connected to Jesus and His church, but also to develop and launch the leaders of tomorrow.

Texas has more than 450 colleges and universities that host nearly 2 million students. While these students make up a small percentage of the Texas population, SBTC Collegiate believes they can have a great impact.

SBTC Collegiate annually uses Reach Texas funds to help churches prayerfully empower, equip, network, and mobilize college students to live on gospel mission regardless of their context. One of the main venues where this happens is Roundup, a three-day collaborative event that draws college students and collegiate ministers from across Texas and beyond. Roundup has grown from having five churches in attendance in 2015 to 66 churches in 2023.

Earlier this year, SBTC Collegiate collaborated with a church to host a conference aimed at discipling and equipping college students to reach people on their campuses. About 250 students from multiple states attended.

As SBTC churches have continued to faithfully give, it has allowed SBTC Collegiate to inspire and equip students to go. Since 2016, three college ministers connected to the collegiate ministry have obeyed the call to plant churches in college towns, and grants have been given toward events that have seen hundreds saved.

SCRIPTURE STUDY Read Psalm 78:1-4. The psalmist encourages an older, more spiritually experienced generation to testify about the works of the Lord to future generations. How can telling future generations about the “praiseworthy acts of the Lord” lead to gospel conversations? What are some ways you can practically accomplish that in your context? Are there younger people in your community to whom you can reach out and tell how you’ve personally seen God at work?

WILLING TO GO, WATCHING IT GROW

Justin Smith New City Church, Austin

After seminary, Arkansas native Justin Smith worked in college ministry at his church in Waco. He'd always considered himself more of a sender than a church planter.

The Lord used relationships built, in part, through the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention's Roundup conference to propel Smith and his family into church planting. Roundup—which is funded through Reach Texas giving—is an annual event that equips collegiate ministries to reach students with the gospel, develops them into leaders, and sends them into strategic kingdom locations.

Smith attended his first Roundup in May 2017 after being invited by Mitch Tidwell, SBTC's collegiate associate. In early 2020, Tidwell connected Smith with Redeemer Church in Lubbock, which has planted more than 20 churches with a focus on collegiate contexts. Smith was in Redeemer's church planting residency system from January 2020 until December 2021.

With help from Redeemer and others, Smith and his team incorporated New City Church in June 2022. New

City began meeting in Smith's home in January 2023 and is now starting home groups in several parts of Austin—including near the University of Texas campus.

"We are new," Smith said, "but 35 people are consistently involved and we are growing every week."

Smith said Send Network SBTC's funding, care, community, and resources have been invaluable. "Send Network SBTC is funding a majority of our ministry budget and made it possible for us to do things that many church plants don't get to do in their first years," Smith said.

POINT TO PONDER Could God be calling you to a work you haven't previously considered? Ask Him to open your heart to any possibility He might have for your life.

PRAYER FOCUS Pray for the Lord to open doors so New City Church can connect with students on college campuses to not only share the gospel, but multiply disciples of Christ who will carry His message forward.

FROM HEARTACHE TO HOPE



Those who have personally experienced disasters such as tornadoes, hurricanes, wildfires, and floods can testify to the overwhelming sense of anger, fear, and loss such incidents leave in their wake.

Those who respond to assist in the aftermath can testify that such tragedies can lead to some of the greatest opportunities to tell people about Jesus Christ.

For the past two decades, SBTC Disaster Relief has ministered to people in crisis, meeting physical needs while seizing upon opportunities to share the gospel. Since its inception, SBTC DR has become one of the largest—and busiest—DR teams in the nation. As faithful praying in the early years of the convention sought an organized, effective, and gospel-centered process to respond to hurting people, the Lord opened the door for a ministry funded through the Reach Texas offering that now consists of 90 units across Texas. It has trained more than 6,000 people to respond to disasters of all types.

Over the past five years, SBTC DR has averaged nearly 20,000 meals prepared annually during various

disasters and crises. At the same time, thousands of people have placed their faith in Christ through SBTC DR efforts.

SBTC DR also sends volunteers into the field for other types of crises, including mass shootings where volunteers and chaplains have made themselves available not only to victims and their families, but to first responders who carry a burden that is hard for many to understand.

Said SBTC DR Director Scottie Stice: “We praise God for the support for SBTC DR that the churches of the SBTC are faithful to provide.”

SCRIPTURE STUDY Read Nehemiah 1:1-3, 2:11-18. Nehemiah was grieved by the dilapidated condition of the walls around Jerusalem and was moved to action. Why do you think Nehemiah was so emotional about what happened to Jerusalem following the exile of God’s people? How did the men respond to Nehemiah when they surveyed the damage? Are there connections between this crisis and the kinds of crises SBTC DR responds to today? Share a few examples.

HELPING THE HURTING—FAST

Hillcrest Baptist Church Jasper

Hillcrest Baptist Church has long been active in SBTC Disaster Relief, sending chaplains, assessors, and a shower and laundry unit with volunteers to meet needs. The church's DR ministry is now poised to expand with the addition of a quick-response mobile kitchen unit (QRU) made possible in part by Reach Texas funds.

QRU feeding volunteers can prepare up to 700 meals per day during a disaster. The QRU's mobility makes rapid response possible during emergencies. Hillcrest acquired a food truck a few years ago for mission projects. Veteran SBTC DR chaplain Wayne Barber, a church deacon and chairman of Hillcrest's DR committee, suggested the unit's use be expanded to include SBTC DR.

The truck came equipped with a commercial griddle, stove, and oven but lacked items needed to be fully operational during a disaster deployment. Using Reach Texas funds, SBTC DR outfitted the Hillcrest QRU with industrial-grade pots, pans, cooking utensils, and a coffee maker, plus a basic food supply.

"When the QRU rolls out to serve during a disaster, it does so with three days' worth of meals ready to prep," said Scottie Stice, SBTC DR director. "When the unit and volunteers deploy, Reach Texas funds cover their travel and other expenses in the field, too," he added. SBTC DR Phase 1 and 2 training sessions, held at Hillcrest in March to credential volunteers for DR work, were also funded by Reach Texas.

"When we're deployed, we know people are hurting. Hopefully, we can go and give them a little bit of relief," said Hillcrest member and SBTC DR volunteer Ray Rodriguez.

POINT TO PONDER SBTC DR is always in need of volunteers. How might serving as a volunteer for SBTC DR prepare you to minister to those in crisis in your community? Has God brought this ministry to your heart?

PRAYER FOCUS Pray that churches active in DR response would continue to find opportunities to share the gospel and pray more volunteers will answer the call to serve people in their greatest time of need.

DAY
7

REACHING PEOPLE WHERE THEY ARE



The gospel message hasn't changed, but over the past quarter-century, the SBTC has equipped its churches to bring the good news to people everywhere in an ever-changing culture.

Our network of churches has stood strong on an unwavering commitment to biblical fidelity and an insistence that the gospel go forth across Texas and beyond. To accomplish this, the Lord has used tightly knit cooperative efforts funded through Reach Texas.

Funds given through this offering have helped churches meet people where they are, resulting in countless gospel presentations and professions of faith. Reach Texas giving has provided SBTC churches with Bibles, evangelism tracts, training, and many other resources in multiple languages. Last year alone, many of these resources were used to help more than 6,000 people come to Christ along the Texas border.

The SBTC has been on the forefront of bringing Jesus' saving message into digital spaces using tools such as its 1Cross app, which offers brief videos to help people

share the gospel in nearly 70 languages. The app has been downloaded more than 200,000 times and used to help countless people across the globe come to faith in Christ. The convention has also partnered with the North American Mission Board to develop curriculum and host statewide trainings for Who's Your One? Advancing the Movement, which aims to assist churches in building an evangelistic culture so they can reach their communities for Christ.

We have seen God faithfully answer our prayers and cannot wait to see what He does through our cooperative efforts over the next 25 years.

SCRIPTURE STUDY Read Matthew 25:35-46. In this passage, Jesus speaks about how His followers interact and engage with people who are strangers, imprisoned, or in need. Where do you see the biggest unmet needs in your community? Is there anything your church or small group can do to meet those needs? What are some of the reasons we sometimes neglect to reach out to people in need?

JESUS IS THE ONLY ANSWER

Elijah Shira Arlington Chinese Bible Church

Elijah Shira, who pastors Arlington Chinese Bible Church, said many Asians emigrate to the U.S. to pursue wealth, make a better life for their families, and to gain significance among loved ones.

Those pursuits, he said, fall short of the biggest blessing they can receive in America.

“Hard work is natural for this group of people,” Shira said. “Money is their pride and [identity], but... Jesus is the answer they have been searching for. He is the only answer for their longing.”

Shira and his church have been working hard to not only reach the Chinese population around them, but people from multiple people groups who have come to the Dallas-Fort Worth area. In December 2022, Arlington Chinese Bible Church hosted an Indian outreach. Fifteen people attended the event, which was assisted by funds given through the Reach Texas offering.

Reach Texas funds were also given to help provide a scholarship to sponsor a FIRE (Forging Integrated Relationships in Evangelism) Initiative intern from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary to help

the church reach Indian students at The University of Texas at Arlington. The FIRE Initiative aims to leverage the SBTC's relationships with professors and students at Southern Baptist academic institutions to increase collaboration in missional ministries through its affiliated churches.

Shira said his church averages about 60 adults in attendance each week, but notes that its “heart for missions is huge.”

“Our Indian outreach ministry is very new,” Shira said. “We are still talking and taking baby steps. We thank the SBTC for its support in outreach efforts.”

POINT TO PONDER Texas is one of the most diverse states in the nation. Consider inviting your international neighbor to a meal to get to know them better.

PRAYER FOCUS Pray God uses all of us to not only see and minister to international people, but to have the courage to share with them that the better life they are seeking can only be found through a relationship with Jesus Christ.



ADVANCING THE MOVEMENT

Take the next step of
who's your
ONE?

DIGITAL RESOURCES AVAILABLE

sbtexas.com/advancing

regeneration

RENEWAL + REBIRTH

AN INTENTIONAL FOCUS ON
church health & growth

sbtexas.com/regeneration

collegiate

MINISTRY

Texas has over 450 colleges and universities with nearly two million students. That's a lot! These students are leaders of today and tomorrow. They are both moldable and malleable. What is impressed upon them today sets the trajectory of the rest of their days.

Connect with SBTC Collegiate

to reach the campus, develop leaders and send kingdom multipliers.

sbtexas.com/collegiate

m3 camp

A summer camp for students to experience and celebrate the **awe and wonder of a glorious God**.

Designed by local churches for local churches so teenagers of the local church can see the **mission** of God through a **moment** with God and join the **movement** of God.

 **students**

sbtexas.com/students

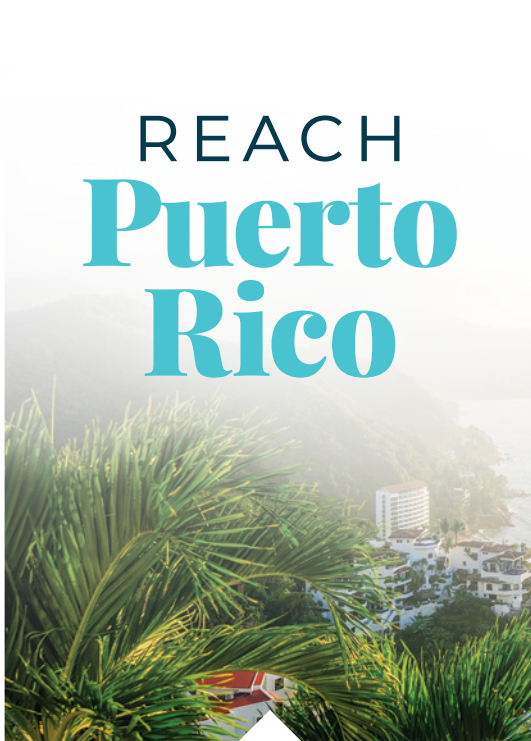


Pray • Learn • Go • Partner

REACH **India**



REACH **Puerto Rico**



REACH **Nevada**



sbtexas.com/mobilization



ESL

English as a Second Language

Learn how to develop an ESL program for your church with student placement, lesson building, teaching techniques, evangelism, and more.

Two-day training

NAMB certification awarded

sbtexas.com/esl



people GROUPS

Texas has 420 different people groups and 300+ spoken languages

Our mission is to equip the local church to reach people groups in Texas, moving from friendship and spiritual conversations to discipleship and house church planting.

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

sbtexas.com/peoplegroups



DISASTER RELIEF TRAINING

PREP • TRAIN • RESPOND

Online Intro to DR

A course for all new volunteers and those seeking to renew their credentials. Consists of three sections with videos and quizzes to complete.

Clean Up & Recovery

Learn how you can help disaster survivors with mudding out or cleaning their homes after floods, tornadoes, wind events, and other natural disasters.

Feeding

Train to be a feeding ministry volunteer to help prepare meals for survivors, first responders, and other volunteers.

For more info & to register sbtexas.com/dr



1cross

An evangelistic tool designed to share the message of the gospel in multiple languages through video/audio presentations.

sbtexas.com/apps



Search "SBTC" to find this resource.



EMPOWER

Conference

**FEBRUARY
26-27, 2024**

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SBTEXAS.COM/EMPOWER

SPECIAL GUESTS



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GAITHER
Vocal Band



SEAN
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**AND
*more***

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