

**For Immediate Release**

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## **WACO'S GRIEF: 10 YEARS LATER**

### ***Hand in Hand Grief Counseling Program Reunites Wacoans to Discussion How City Has Coped Since the Branch Davidian Incident***

**WACO, TEXAS – April 10, 2003** – Hand in Hand, a one-of-a-kind grief counseling program offered by Wilkirson-Hatch-Bailey Funeral Homes, today brought together a group of professionals in the Waco community and surrounding areas to discuss how the city has changed since the Branch Davidian stand-off in 1993. Waco-based Chaplain Curtis Holland led the two-hour discussion called "Reflections 2003: Growing through Grief," which was held at the Taylor Museum of Waco History.

The sole purpose of Reflections 2003 was to reunite the people who were and still may be affected by the events of February 28<sup>th</sup> through April 19<sup>th</sup> 1993 and offer comfort to them. The focus of the non-denominational event was on the people who were doing their everyday job in and around the city of Waco, Texas and were asked or required to assist in the events involving the Branch Davidian siege.



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From February 28<sup>th</sup> to well beyond April 19, 1993, Chaplain Holland himself counseled ATF agents, families of Branch Davidians, hospital staff and city employees as they dealt with the grief surrounding the incident. "Something of this magnitude does not happen without changing lives forever," said Holland. "The entire Waco community is changed."

Participants included McLennan County Sheriff Larry Lynch; Methodist Children's Home Director Dr. Jack Kyle Daniels; former Waco Mayor Bob Sheehy, Baylor University Professor of Religion Dr. Bob Pitts, KXXV-TV news anchor Ann Harder, Bellmead Fire Chief James Carl, KWTX-TV News Director Rick Bradfield and others. Waco-based clergy and social workers were invited to observe the program.



***Waco's Grief: 10 Years Later***  
***Page 2 of 2***

**About Hand in Hand**

Wilkirson-Hatch-Bailey Funeral Homes offers the Hand in Hand grief counseling service for all residents in Central Texas. The service is free of charge to anyone who may be experiencing any kind of grief.

The director of Hand in Hand is Chaplain Curtis Holland, affectionately known as "Waco's Pastor." Holland came to Wilkirson-Hatch-Bailey after 27 years as the Director of Pastoral Care at Hillcrest Baptist Medical Center. Holland has a keen ability to listen and assist those in need, and his services range in nature. Recently, he helped a man who lost his job find a new one, and even drove him to the interview. Holland also received a telephone call from a widower who told him it was the first day he had not cried since losing his wife, and he simply wanted to tell someone. Holland is also counseling a young boy via email whose father is terminally ill.

The Hand in Hand Program sponsors ongoing events and seminars to educate Central Texas clergy, caregivers and residents about grief and other related issues. In April 2003, Hand In Hand brought together the community of Waco for a forum on how the city grew in the 10 years following the Branch Davidian incident. In October 2002, Hand in Hand brought to Waco, Texas noted author and educator Dr. Alan Wolfelt.



On a weekly basis Hand in Hand offers a grief support group, lead by Holland, which meets at the Wilkirson-Hatch-Bailey Bosque Boulevard location on the first Tuesday of each month at 4:00 p.m. It is an open meeting and free of charge.

For more information on Wilkirson-Hatch-Bailey's Hand in Hand Program, contact Chaplain Curtis Holland at (254) 753-3691,

or toll free (888) 822-3691.

## **About Wilkirson-Hatch-Bailey Funeral Homes**

Now in its 78<sup>th</sup> year, Wilkirson-Hatch-Bailey is truly a family serving families. A 50-year member by invitation of the prestigious Selected Independent Funeral Homes, founded in 1917 as National Selected Morticians (NSM), Wilkirson-Hatch-Bailey strives to maintain the highest ethical and professional standards. Hatch Bailey sits on the Board of Directors of the International Order of the Golden Rule, and he is a founding member of The Leaders Network. The Leaders Network is a community of funeral leaders who aim to create successful businesses while providing superior value for their families, community involvement and the workplace of choice for the employees. Current staff members of Wilkirson-Hatch-Bailey have a combined 367 years of experience serving the Central Texas community. Each employee is carefully trained to provide conscientious, efficient service in the manner and tradition established by Roy Hatch.

In 1925 Dillard J. Wilkirson, a businessman from Eddy, Texas, assisted both his son, Jim Wilkirson, and son-in-law, Roy Hatch, in establishing Wilkirson and Hatch Funeral Home. From the beginning until his retirement in 1975, Roy Hatch served as President of the company. Today his grandson, Hatch Bailey, represents the fourth generation of the family to operate the funeral homes. Bailey began working at the funeral home in 1979. Wilkirson-Hatch-Bailey was selected Business of the Year by the Greater Waco Chamber of Commerce in 1995. For more information, visit [www.wilkirsonhatchbailey.com](http://www.wilkirsonhatchbailey.com).