

# together\_60903

June 6, 2003

Posted: 6/06/03

## **TOGETHER: Strategic plan charts BGCT's course**

The Baptist General Convention of Texas strategic plan casts a seven-part vision for Texas Baptists-reaching all people, beginning new churches, improving church health, encouraging healthy families, meeting human needs, equipping the laity and developing theological education. We are moving forward in building a stronger convention by helping our churches, institutions and related ministries be stronger and healthier.

In the next five years, I believe, we will see several things happen in Texas Baptist life:

We will start more than enough churches to maintain our current church-to-population ratio. This will mean that we must start between 1,100 and 1,200 churches to help us share the gospel with the ethnic cultures of Texas.

CHARLES WADE Executive Director BGCT Executive Board
--

We will help our churches be missional in nature. They will see themselves as existing to move the kingdom of God forward in their communities and around the world. That means church members will want to see God's will done in earth as it is in heaven. It means churches will be the presence of Christ, moving outside their walls and into the streets, following our Savior into an incarnational ministry in the world. The missions network will be a significant resource to churches in being involved personally in mission endeavors.

We will help churches know themselves as the Body of Christ. This will be expressed by a deep devotion to God and to growing church members into the likeness of Christ. Churches will give themselves to effective biblical teaching so that members grow into fully mature disciples of Jesus Christ. These churches will take responsibility for helping the families in the church become healthy and loving “schools for Christian character.”

Our BGCT Executive Board staff increasingly will be available to and known among the churches. The BGCT exists to help the churches be what God has called them to be and assist them in working together to achieve larger kingdom goals than they can hope to do alone. Information technology will be used to improve services to congregations. All staff will see themselves not as promoters of specific programs but as consultants to help churches find the best resources and assistance in achieving their God-given calling.

We will see growing numbers of God-called men and women preparing for ministry in the churches. We will work with churches, associations and institutions to create a seamless procedure by which ministers can move from whatever level of training they may have to achieve the highest level of training God calls them to secure.

We will see growing cooperation. This requires mutual trust and shared vision. By building closer relationships, paying closer attention to communication, and honoring one another, we will seek to attain a new

level of cooperation in Baptist life. We will know we are succeeding in this when there is increased involvement in mission activities; growing participation in training events; a spirit of fellowship and harmony of feeling permeating our meetings; and rising financial support for our activities in evangelism, missions, Christian education and benevolent work.

Texas Baptist institutions, associations, mission organizations and churches will know they are part of a great family. We will rejoice in the knowledge that we can support and encourage one another as we seek to be the presence of Christ in the world and work together to advance all the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom.

We are loved.

News of religion, faith, missions, Bible study and Christian ministry among Texas Baptist churches, in the BGCT, the Southern Baptist Convention ( SBC ) and around the world.