

Seminar explores impact of BGCT reorganization on churches_111504

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BGCT
Executive
Director
Charles Wade,
consultant
Sherrill Spies,
BGCT
President Ken
Hall and
Executive
Board Vice
Chairman
Wesley
Shotwell
explore the
implications
of BGCT
reorganization
for Texas
Baptist
churches.
(Nan Dickson
Photo)

Seminar explores impact of BGCT reorganization on churches

By Marv Knox

Editor

SAN ANTONIO-The implementation phase of the Baptist General Convention of Texas' most significant reorganization in two generations will focus on helping churches, according to the consultant supporting the process.

New BGCT president calls on Texas Baptists to rally around missions_111504

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New BGCT president calls on Texas Baptists to rally around missions

By Teresa Young

For Texas Baptist Communications

SAN ANTONIO-Texas Baptists should unify around missions, new Baptist General Convention of Texas President Albert Reyes said shortly after his election.

God rewarded TBM with expanded opportunities, leader insists_111504

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God rewarded TBM with expanded opportunities, leader insists

By John Hall

Texas Baptist Communications

SAN ANTONIO—God noticed Texas Baptist Men's effective ministry within its home state, and he is calling volunteers to serve around the world, Executive Director Leo Smith told the Texas Baptist Men convention.

Churches should prepare before disaster strikes, TBM leaders recommend_111504

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Churches should prepare before disaster strikes, TBM leaders recommend

By Teresa Young

For Texas Baptist Communications

SAN ANTONIO—When a disaster hits, will your church be ready?

'Once in a lifetime' venture becomes life-changing mission for TBM volunteer_111504

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'Once in a lifetime' venture becomes life-changing mission for TBM volunteer

By John Hall

Texas Baptist Communications

SAN ANTONIO-In 1994, Sam Dunkin thought he stumbled upon a “once in a lifetime opportunity” when he found a flier noting the need for people to roof a Kenyan church.

Texas WMU celebrates families involved in missions globally_111504

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Newly
elected
Texas WMU
President
Nelda
Taylor
Thiede
(right)
poses with
past
presidents
(left to
right)
Maurice
Johnston,
Millie
Bishop,
Gerry
Dunkin,
Mary
Humphries,
Jeane Law
and Kathy
Hillman at
the WMU
Annual
Meeting in
San
Antonio.
(Nan
Dickson
Photo)

Texas WMU celebrates families involved in missions globally

By Teresa Young

For Texas Baptist Communications

SAN ANTONIO-With "Celebrando la familia en misiones ... Celebrating the family on mission" as its theme, the Woman's Missionary Union of Texas 124th annual meeting presented the stories of families working to spread the gospel around the world.

Texas WMU board fills staff vacancy, hears reports on missions programs_111504

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Texas WMU board fills staff vacancy, hears reports on missions programs

By Teresa Young

For Texas Baptist Communications

SAN ANTONIO-The Woman's Missionary Union of Texas board of directors approved three recommendations involving its program staff.

Look for common ground to avoid worship wars, ETBU dean suggests_111504

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Look for common ground to avoid worship wars, ETBU dean suggests

By Ken Camp

Managing Editor

SAN ANTONIO-A church discussion about worship that begins with the divisive subject of personal musical preferences is doomed to failure, the dean of East Texas Baptist University's School of Fine Arts maintained.

Baptist Briefs_111504

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Baptist Briefs

Baptist benefactor McAfee dies. James McAfee, benefactor of Baptist educational causes, died in Atlanta, one week after heart surgery. In 1997, Mercer University named its new seminary the James and Carolyn McAfee School of Theology following the couple's \$10 million gift. McAfee, 65, built a successful career in health-care management and most recently served as chairman, president and chief executive officer of Hallmark Systems. McAfee served the past six years as chairman of the board of the autonomous, national newsjournal Baptists Today, headquartered in Macon, Ga. He was a member of Second-Ponce de Leon Baptist Church in Atlanta.

D.C. Baptists pass \$1.2 million budget. Messengers to the District of Columbia Baptist Convention overwhelmingly adopted a \$1,225,842 budget, even though the convention's executive board earlier had set a \$1,050,000 cap on the 2005 budget. When executive board members became aware the budget would mean the elimination of three staff positions, they reversed themselves and asked the convention's finance committee to come up with a new budget. The convention used to receive about \$475,000 a year in supplemental funding from the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board. But that agency's officials decided in 2002 to discontinue the funding after a dispute over whether the regional body was too open to liberalism through its congregations and affiliations. The last year the convention received Southern Baptist funding was 2003.

GuideStone trustees approve budget. Trustees of GuideStone Financial Resources-formerly the Southern Baptist Annuity Board-approved a \$55.7 million budget for the coming year, a 4.8 percent increase over 2004. President O.S. Hawkins told trustees many participants in GuideStone's medical insurance plan will see no rate increase in 2005, and about 40 percent will have reduced rates. He also announced a 10 percent reduction in rates for personal plans' long-term disability coverage. Doug Day, executive officer for benefits services, told trustees GuideStone medical plans will transition to Blue Cross Blue Shield as its single network provider Jan. 1.

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.

70-year-old Baptist layman swims the English Channel, breaks record_111504

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70-year-old Baptist layman swims the English Channel, breaks record

RIDGEFIELD, Conn. (ABP)-George Brunstad of Wilton, Conn., gives new meaning to the term "putting feet to your faith." In fact, he also put his

arms and his legs into it. In an effort to raise awareness for his church's ministry in Haiti, the 70-year-old Baptist layman swam the English Channel.

His swim set a new record, not for speed—he finished in 15 hours, 59 minutes—but because he is the oldest person ever to tackle the channel. He broke the record of Bertram Clifft Batt of Australia, who was 67 years old when he made the journey in 1987.

“His inspiration for the swim came when he went with our church last November on a mission trip to Haiti,” said Bob Guffey, Brunstad's pastor at Wilton Baptist Church. “George swam to raise awareness of and money for the Center of Hope orphanage and school project that (the church) sponsors in Hinche, Haiti.”

ANOTHER VIEW: ‘Gift’ must be exercised responsibly_111504

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ANOTHER VIEW: 'Gift' must be exercised responsibly

The role played by religious faith and moral values in the 2004 election is the biggest story to emerge in the wake of George W. Bush's victory.

It is staggering but true that in a time of war and terrorist threats, more

voters cast their ballots based on their perception of the faith and moral values of the two candidates than for any other reason. The huge majority of those voters went for President Bush. They won him the election.

In an era in which the Republican ascendancy depends on committed Christian voters, the people who will be most influential in setting the agenda of this nation are those who shape the moral vision of Christian communities.

These voters are all around me here in Tennessee, a state that went for Bush by a large margin. They are not necessarily committed Republicans. They are not generally all that interested in politics. They are just regular folks who go to church on Sunday (and often on Wednesday), work hard all week, raise their families and try to do the right thing.

David
Gushee

DOWN HOME: Lifetime prayers yield a blessing_111504

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DOWN HOME: Lifetime prayers yield a blessing

"Daddy, I have something to tell you," Lindsay said over the phone, calling me at my office late on a deadline night.

"What's that, Doll?" I asked, anticipating the next words from my oldest daughter, who has blessed me with incomprehensible joy and delight for 21 years.

"Aaron asked me to marry him."