

Texas Baptist leader Billy Ray Parmer dies in car crash_22304

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Texas Baptist leader dies in car crash

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Billy Ray Parmer, president of Gloria al Padre and former two-time Baptist General Convention of Texas second vice president, died Feb. 28 in a car crash outside Abernathy.

Parmer, 78, pulled his sports utility vehicle around two stopped cars at an intersection near Abernathy when a truck towing an 8-foot trailer hit the driver's side of Parmer's automobile, according to a Texas Department of Safety spokeswoman.

He and his wife, Joan, were airlifted to a Lubbock hospital where he died. She was in serious condition March 1.

Parmer served as pastor of churches in San Gabriel, Golinda, and Valley Mills for 38 years. He was honored as rural pastor of the year four times and received the 1995 George W. Truett Churchman of the Year award, presented by the Baylor University Alumni Association.

He served in many capacities in the BGCT besides the second vice presidency, including many committee positions. He also was co-chairman of Texas Baptists Committed.

Parmer was passionate about mission work in Mexico, friends said, and until his death served as president of Gloria al Padre, an organization that seeks to link volunteers with needs throughout the Americas in an effort to spread the gospel.

"He was very committed," said David Currie, executive director of Texas Baptists Committed. "You could always count on Billy Ray. When he said he would do something it would get done."

A service is set for March 3 at 3 p.m. at First Baptist Church in Lorenzo. Another service is scheduled for March 4 at 2 p.m. at First Baptist Church in Valley Mills.

He is survived by his wife, their five children and 12 grandchildren.

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