

Christian Life Commission will retain familiar name_20705

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Christian Life Commission will retain familiar name

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Texas Baptist Communications

DALLAS-The Christian Life Commission gets to keep the name it has carried for nearly 55 years, the committee drafting new bylaws for the Baptist General Convention of Texas has decided.

The governance committee had considered Christian Life Council as an alternative to Christian Life Commission. The “council” language more effectively connected with the new governance structure, but some Texas Baptists believed the current “commission” name should be kept because of its familiarity around the state and its history of effective ministry said Wesley Shotwell, chairperson of the committee.

The committee decided the “wisest course of action was to keep the name Christian Life Commission because of its historic recognition across the state,” Shotwell said.

The panel had planned to conduct a scientific survey to test the name's recognition, but after more discussion members “decided that a survey was not the wisest use of time and money,” he said.

On another matter, the committee established a three-person subcommittee to analyze concerns about and possible alternatives to a proposed means of electing BGCT Executive Board members. Some members expressed concern that West Texas would not receive adequate participation under the proposed plan.

Subcommittee members are Mitch Wilson, pastor of First Baptist Church in Shallowater, near Lubbock; Jim Nelson, an Austin attorney; and David Nabors, treasurer and chief financial officer of the BGCT.

The subcommittee decision came after “healthy discussion about the issue of drawing sector lines and how to give people the best opportunity to have their voices heard,” Shotwell said. “We wanted to be sure we had completely thought out all of the ramifications of how we select Executive Board members.

“We want to make sure it's as fair as possible, but it will not be perfect.”

A proposed BGCT constitution approved on first reading at the convention's annual meeting in November 2004 calls for a system of electing board members based on resident Baptist membership in counties.

Because of the sparse population of Baptists in West and South Texas, an equal division based on membership would create large geographic “sectors” in those two regions from which board members would be elected.

In order to take effect, the proposed constitution must be approved at this year's annual meeting, Nov. 14-15 in Austin.

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