

BGCT annual meeting slated to feature Rick Warren, historic presidential election

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The Baptist General Convention of Texas annual meeting will feature Pastor [Rick Warren](#) and a historic presidential election as messengers elect either the first female BGCT president or the first second-generation BGCT president.

The meeting, themed “Together We Can Do More— Missions,” will be held Oct. 29-30 at the Amarillo Civic Center.

Warren, who will speak Oct. 29 and whose *The Purpose Driven Life* has sold more than 20 million copies, is pastor of the 22,000-member Saddleback Community Church in Lake Forest, Calif. He has been called “one of the most influential pastors in America” by *The Economist*. *Time* magazine called him “America’s new people’s pastor” as it named him among the 25 most influential evangelicals in America.

The Purpose Driven Life and its predecessor, *The Purpose Driven Church*, spurred congregations across the country to undertake efforts dubbed “40 Days of Purpose” where members of congregations seek to find God’s calling upon their respective lives.

BGCT President Steve Vernon hopes the meeting will encourage Texas Baptists to become further involved in mission work.

“I hope this meeting stokes the fire of missions in the hearts of Texas Baptists,” he said. “We are doing so much in mission work locally, throughout the state and around the world. We want to gather to celebrate that and improve upon it.”

Current BGCT First Vice President Joy Fenner of Garland and David Lowrie, pastor of First Baptist Church in Canyon, will be nominated for convention president.

Fenner is a former missionary to Japan and retired executive director-treasurer of Woman’s Missionary Union of Texas. Lowrie, who has been pastor of churches in both East Texas and West Texas, is the son of D.L. Lowrie, longtime pastor of First Baptist Church in Lubbock and former BGCT president.

If elected, Fenner has pledged to continue the missions emphasis set forth by Vernon.

“Through the various but limited spheres of influence of a president, I would hope my missions passion and experience would encourage churches and individuals to engage in missions and ministry beyond the needs of their own congregation,” she said. “I believe we are richly blessed with gifted lay men and women who can make a difference locally and globally.”

Lowrie has said he would like to bring the BGCT “back to the middle,” where he believes the convention’s leadership would be more

representative of its affiliated congregations.

“I believe our convention faces a critical crossroads, and as we go into the future, I believe we need to look at the future through fresh eyes and with a fresh voice calling us to action,” Lowrie said.

David Coffey, president of the Baptist World Alliance, also will speak Oct. 29, giving Texas Baptists a glimpse into how God is working around the world through the extended Baptist family.

The Baptist General Convention of Texas is one of more than 200 conventions and unions that are part of the Baptist World Alliance. The BWA serves more than 110 million Baptists around the globe.

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