

Rex Horne to lead Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (BP)—Rex Horne, longtime Arkansas Baptist pastor and former president of Ouachita Baptist University, is executive director-elect of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

The state convention's executive board approved the recommendation of its operating committee, which served as the search team, during a special called meeting Oct. 10. Horne has served as the interim executive director since December.

The decision makes Horne the 35th executive director in the 175-year history of the convention, which began in 1848.

The executive director leads the convention staff in serving the needs of and assisting about 1,500 churches and encouraging missions cooperation among them.

"I am deeply humbled and honored to be named the next executive director of the ABSC," Horne said. "During these last 10 months, there have been a number of challenges met and steps taken that will have a positive impact on our future cooperative ministries.

"I will respect all our churches. I will assist and strive to encourage our pastors and their vision. I will listen, learn and lead optimistically in a time that is transitional but can also be transformational."

Bill Panneck, senior executive pastor at Central Baptist Church in Jonesboro and chairman of the operating committee, said the committee members recognized early on that prayer would be the key for God to lead

them to “his perfect choice, at his perfect time, in his perfect way.”

When the opportunity came to hear Horne’s vision and plans going into the future for Arkansas Baptists, Panneck said it became clear to the whole team he was the person to lead them going forward.

“What a privilege it was for me, as chairman of the search team, to recommend Dr. Horne to the executive board and have them unanimously approve one of Arkansas’ great statesmen as the next executive director of the ABSC. God is in control and the future for Arkansas Baptists is very bright with Dr. Horne at the helm,” he said.

Jeff Paxton, senior pastor at First Baptist Church in Dover and president of the state convention’s executive board, said he is excited Horne answered the call to be the next executive director for Arkansas Baptists.

“Dr. Horne has admirably and effectively served Arkansas Baptists for decades, and I have no doubt he will do the same in the future. His energy, passion, vision and wisdom, along with his steady hand will lead us well as we endeavor to win the lost for Christ. It is evident God’s Spirit has been upon him, and I’m certain that will be the case as the ABSC moves forward,” Paxton said.

Horne served as pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church in Little Rock from 1990 to 2006, president of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention from 1996 to 1997 and president of Ouachita Baptist University from 2006 to 2015. Additionally, Horne was a trustee for OBU and a board member for Baptist Health.

The past several years, Horne has also interacted with several Arkansas Baptist churches through his work with the Arkansas Baptist Foundation as a consultant.

He earned a Master of Divinity degree from Southwestern Baptist

Theological Seminary and a Doctor of Ministry degree from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

Horne and his wife, Becky, have been married 50 years. They have four children and 15 grandchildren.