

Don Gibson to retire as Texas Baptist Men executive director

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DALLAS—Don Gibson, 78, who has served [Texas Baptist Men](#) in a variety of roles over the last four decades, will retire as the missions organization's executive director Dec. 31.

The TBM board of directors unanimously elected Gibson as the group's fifth executive director in 2011 after he served as interim executive director. At the time, Gibson noted he "tried to retire twice, but God had something else in mind."

Early involvement in lay renewal

After participating in a lay renewal weekend at Fellowship Baptist Church in northwest Houston in 1975, Gibson and his wife, Lena, began serving as coordinators with TBM renewal teams.

Since 1959, Gibson had worked for Hudson Products in Houston, advancing from draftsman to senior management. However, in 1982, he submitted his resignation as engineering manager to his immediate supervisor, the company's president.

Gibson went to meet with TBM Executive Director Bob Dixon in Dallas, taking with him the prayer journal he used in his daily devotions. Showing Dixon multiple entries in the journal, Gibson said he believed God led him to quit his job to serve in lay ministries with TBM. Dixon told him he had been praying several years for a layman to join the staff to work in lay ministries, but no money was available for salary.

However, several lay renewal leaders formed a nonprofit organization,

Laity Renewal Ministries, and named Gibson its director with a simple job description—follow God’s direction. For five years, Gibson worked as a full-time Mission Service Corps volunteer with TBM, while Laity Renewal Ministries provided his salary.

Expanded lay ministries

In 1987, Gibson officially joined the staff as director of lay ministries. In that role, he led TBM to expand prison ministry from occasional evangelistic events to ongoing discipleship and more comprehensive restorative justice ministry. In 1998, he received a volunteer service award from Gov. George W. Bush for his work in restorative justice ministry.



Texas Baptist Men Executive Director presents a copy of the *Experiencing God* workbook to Randy Newberry, church renewal and men’s ministry consultant with TBM. Gibson announced his plans to retire Dec. 31. (TBM Photo)Gibson also helped TBM pilot the first Experiencing God weekends, based on the Bible study material written by Henry Blackaby and Claude King. Within a few years, the Experiencing God weekends and retreats spread throughout the United States and to Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium and South Africa.

That led to his work with Henry Blackaby Ministries from 2002 to 2007. He

continued to serve as a TBM volunteer before rejoining the mission organization's staff in 2008 as church renewal consultant and men's ministry coordinator.

Called to provide leadership

When Leo Smith retired as TBM Executive Director in 2011, the organization turned to Gibson to serve as interim executive director several months before the board elected him as executive director.

Al Wise of Arlington, who said he has known Gibson more than 40 years, served on the committee that asked him to accept the leadership role four years ago.

"I don't know anyone in Texas Baptist life who doesn't appreciate Don," Wise said. "He is a wonderful man of God who prays about everything he does. I appreciate him greatly."

Associate Executive Director Mickey Lenamon will handle day-to-day administrative responsibilities until an interim executive director is named, Wise explained. The TBM personnel committee, along with the current and immediate past president of the organization, will serve as the committee to name the interim and to search for a permanent executive director.