

Convención celebrates 100 years of UFM

July 3, 2017

SAN ANTONIO—Members of Union Femenil Misionera de Texas—Hispanic Woman’s Missionary Union of Texas—celebrated the organization’s centennial anniversary at the annual meeting of Convención Bautista Hispana de Texas June 25-27.

Messengers to the annual Hispanic Baptist Convention of Texas filled the sanctuary of Trinity Baptist Church in San Antonio to mark the anniversary by giving to missions causes and hearing a message from Raquel Contreras, director of Casa Bautista de Publicaciones in El Paso.

The centennial celebration began one day prior to the annual meeting at a special event at Primera Iglesia Bautista San Marcos, the birthplace of UFM.

Endowment in recognition of UFM

UFM Executive Director Bea Mesquias and her husband, Richard, presented a \$100,000 endowment in recognition of the organization’s anniversary. The couple saw the need for a home health service in South Texas, and in 1994, they began Bee First Primary Home Care and Hospice in Harlingen.

“God has opened many doors for us. The money goes and comes, and we give it back to the Lord,” she said. Mesquias served as a past president of UFM and was the first woman president of Convención.

Additional gifts celebrating the anniversary included 200 pairs of shoes and a large display of baby items, donated to two missions partners, Buckner’s

Shoes for Orphan Souls and Embrace Grace.

More than 1,200 Hispanic Texas Baptists attended the three-day annual gathering, which included tracks for children, students, young leaders, English-speakers and ministers.

Convención conducts business



Hispanic Baptist Convention of Texas President Rolando Aguirre, pastor for Spanish-language ministries and discipleship team leader at Calvary Baptist Church in McAllen, preaches at the Convención annual meeting. (BGCT PHOTO/Jordan Parker) Rolando Aguirre, pastor of Spanish-language ministries at Calvary Baptist Church in McAllen, was elected to a second one-year term as Convención president.

Other officers are First Vice President Vince Gonzales from North Dallas Family Church in Carrollton; Second Vice President Carlos Valencia from Iglesia Bautista Victoria en Cristo of Fort Worth; and Secretary Carmen Gaytan from Calvary Baptist Church in McAllen.

In other business, messengers approved three bylaw changes. The first allows Convención officials to move the date of the annual gathering as needed, including moving the meeting to July 29-31, 2018, for Texas

Baptists' Family Gathering.

The second granted authority to institute a registration fee for Convención attendees beginning in 2019.

The messengers also approved a two-tiered membership—affiliated and cooperating churches. The first group will continue to participate in the various activities and initiatives of Convención but will not have the privilege of sending messengers. The second will provide regular and systematic financial support, and its members will be eligible to be messengers, officials and hold any leadership position in Convención.

“Part of our theme of transformation is for our Hispanic churches to transform our minds for more collaboration with BGCT initiatives through the Cooperative Program and the development of new programs through Convención,” Aguirre said.

“We need to develop a comprehensive plan for our Hispanic churches to cooperate together for maximum impact and for the benefit of more than 1,060 Hispanic churches in our state. Convención exists to equip, activate and make a lasting impact together.”

Aguirre emphasized the importance of the partnership between Convención and the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

“Together, we can work to advance the kingdom of God,” he said.

Rolando Rodriguez, director of BGCT Hispanic ministries, likewise stressed the importance of cooperation.

“Texas Baptists are known for collaboration, and we recognize the state of Texas is very large,” he said. “As the Hispanic population continues to grow, our partnership with Convención will be focused on impacting the Hispanic population for Christ.”

Convención recognized four churches for giving to the Cooperative Program—Iglesia Bautista Gethsemani in Fort Worth, Primera Mision Bautista in Sulphur Springs, Stone Gate Baptist Church in Alice and Northside Community Church in San Antonio.

Sergio Ramos, church engagement officer for Buckner International, received the Gary Cook Servant Leadership Award, named for the chancellor and former president of Dallas Baptist University.

DBU, East Texas Baptist University and Baylor University's Truett Theological Seminary also awarded Hispanic student scholarships.